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This booklet presents a step-by-step system for planning and carrying out an effective public communication campaign. In his discussion, the author concentrates on various planning processes rather than on the mechanics of writing, designing, photographing, or editing. However, while the booklet's emphasis is definitely on planning, many specific practical tips are interspersed throughout the various chapters. Individual chapters focus in turn on the importance of communication planning, solving problems through communication, organizing a communication campaign, identifying communication objectives, developing systematic communication strategy, using flowcharts to reduce wasted time and effort, budget planning for a communication campaign, and evaluating a communication campaign. An annotated bibliography of relevant publications is also included. (Author/JG)

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Words, Pictures, Media

Communication in Educational Politics

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by lloyd prentice

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by lloyd prentice

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INTRODUCTION

Effective public communication can serve you and your organization in many ways. It can help you elect a candidate, raise funds for a community center, publicize a city-wide clean-up day, sell out a concert, or get people involved in efforts to improve the quality of public education.

Many fine books tell you how to do the technical and creative chores of public communication. Few books, unfortunately, explain in simple terms how to plan. Professional advertising, public relations and media people have many "tricks of the trade" up their sleeves to simplify the planning process. Lack of proper planning, on the other hand, too often puts the citizen at a distinct disadvantage in the fierce competition for public attention.

In this book I've tried to lay out a step-by-step system to help you plan and carry out public communication campaigns that really work. I've emphasized thinking, researching, deciding and organizing rather than writing, designing, photographing, or editing because this is where I think the real need exists.

While the heavy stress is on planning, many specific how-to tips are included throughout the book to help you put theory into practice. I do wish there were space for more of these practical tips, but such is not the case.

Many gracious people helped me put these words and ideas together. My fine editors at the Institute for Responsive Education, Barbara Prentice and Bill Burges, deserve special thanks. Laurie Beckelman was a penetrating critic at various stages of the manuscript and contributed valuable creative work of her own. For reasons that go beyond words I'd like to express deep regard and gratitude to a fine teacher, Bill Rivers; a dear colleague, Donis Dondis; and a treasured friend, Dean LaCoe. Finally, my humble appreciation to the many students who have taught me, with special mention to Faith Miller who helped compile the reading list.

Chapter 1

Everything you do or don't do, say or don't say, says something to someone

Chances are you want to change the way some people think, feel, or relate to schools in your community or you wouldn't be bothering with this book.

If you want to change people, there's one essential thing you have to do. You have to communicate.

If you want to change the way people think or feel, you first have to get their attention. Then you have to hit them with new information or, at least, old information recycled into a logical, novel, or persuasive package.

If you want to change the way they act, you have to get their attention, then offer them incentives. Whether you believe in carrots or sticks is beside the point. In either case you give people information that spells out the details of your incentives.

You have to communicate, in other words, and that's what this book is all about -- communication and how to use it to get your way (or at least exert a little influence) in the educational policies of your community.

It's impossible not to communicate something whenever you deal with people. Even when you keep your mouth shut, believe it or not, you're communicating all over the place. On the other hand, it's bloody hard to communicate just exactly what you want to communicate.

Communication for a purpose, or communication to get things done, is not as easy as you might think. If you've gone through a few years of marriage, or if you have a teenager in the house, you already know how hard it is at times to communicate with people you

know and love. Part of the problem is that most of us are more interested in talking than listening. But for communication to happen there needs to be at least two people--a talker and a listener. It's best, in fact, if they take turns. You might say that real communication begins with listening--listening with the openness and sensitivity needed to understand where the other person is coming from, to understand the other person's point of view, needs, feelings, and problems.

To influence educational policy you have to listen and talk with people you don't know and will probably never even meet face to face. This is called public communication. It's definitely harder than personal communication. And it also begins with listening.

You may be wondering what I meant when I said that it's impossible not to communicate something whenever you deal with other people. Imagine that you ask your daughter how things went at school and all you get is silence or an evasive answer. Isn't this "failure to communicate" itself a form of communication, a tip that something's wrong or something's on her mind?

So you bring in other information to try to figure out what to say next. Is it report card day? Has your child been having problems with other children? Was today the day they picked the team or assigned parts for the school play? You make a guess about what your child is saying through her silence and then proceed from there. This whole process involves communication. Information is being exchanged. It may or may not be accurate information. It may or may not be effective communication. You may guess wrong about what's bothering your child, for instance, and the way you respond as a result of your guess may make matters altogether worse. But it is communication. Indeed, several quite surprising or unexpected impressions might be communicated to the new next door neighbor who dropped in for coffee during this conversation:

a) Your child is emotionally disturbed
b) There's a generation gap in your family
c) You spoil your child

Regardless of the more or less false impressions your neighbor relates later at home, there's a subtle, often silent process going on -- a process that can't be avoided when people live, work, or play together. It's called communication and it's as common as the air we breathe. And sometimes it's just as bad. We can make it better, but not without considerable thought, planning and effort. It's no different, really, from anything else worth doing. It can be

done if we try.

Okay, so you've got a vigorous new citizen organization and you intend to do something about the schools. Well, everything you do or don't do, everything you say or don't say, says something to someone. Even the fact that your organization exists says different things to different people. If you want to say things that will really make a difference, that will accomplish the good things you want to accomplish in your community, you've got to have a public communication policy that's articulated into a well-conceived plan and skillfully implemented in practice.

READ, WATCH, AND LISTEN

As central to your success as knowing what audience you want to reach is knowing what media to use and who the key personalities are within the media. Once you know who you want to contact in the media, you also need to know how to treat them. Here are a few tips on getting to know the media and the people who work there:

1. Read the papers, watch TV and listen to the radio. Read, watch and listen to things that normally would not interest you.
2. Start a file box with cards for each media outlet. List:
   a. Addresses and phone numbers;
   b. Type of audience it reaches;
   c. News and public service policies;
   d. Special programs or columns that might offer coverage for your organization;
   e. The person to whom you should send releases or other messages. Might include public service directors, assignment editors, city desk editors, reporters, producers. When any of these people help you, thank them. They need encouragement and feedback as much as you do.
3. Be courteous. Media professionals have standards, problems, deadlines, and interests far beyond you and your organization. Don't hound them.
4. If you are in doubt about procedures, call. Media folks don't bite. In fact, you'll probably get good advice and maybe even make a friend.

Laurie Beckelman

Chapter 2

Problems, problems, problems -- the nastiest ones are the ones you don't even know you have

Before you even bother with a communication plan, you have to have a problem -- preferably several tough problems because then you get to make up a niftier plan.

A problem is like a dense thicket or treacherous mountain. You're not exactly sure how to get through this unknown territory, but for one reason or another you must, even though you're not exactly sure what's on the other side. It's at times like this that you'd like to have a map.

A plan is like a map. A good one will guide you safely through your problem. Of course if you know the territory you don't need a map, nor do you need a plan if you don't have a problem.

The nastiest problems, unfortunately, are the ones you don't even know you have. Because then you're likely to get caught in the middle of the desert without a canteen.

Before you even think about public communication, you should think about your problems. If you're trying to change the schools, you already know you've got lots of problems -- stubborn bureaucrats, those other parents who're slow to get involved, inadequate knowledge or information, insufficient hours in the day to accomplish what you need to do, and the fact that you belong to five other citizen organizations.

Some problems are caused by laws of nature -- cars that won't start, frozen pipes, flooded basements, stuff like that.

Some problems are caused by other people -- litter, racial discrimination, wars, etc.

Some problems are caused in part by ourselves, but we think they're caused by other people -- boring committee meetings, some arguments and disagreements, "communication breakdowns."

There're always plenty of problems around. One of the fine arts of problem solving is knowing which ones to deal with and which ones to leave alone. Face it, even Sir Edmund Hillary can only climb one mountain at a time.

Generally speaking, however, there're really two kinds of problems: 1) problems that solve themselves in time such as colds, adolescence or grain surpluses (these problems usually get worse if you tinker with them); and, 2) problems that definitely get stickier if you don't do something, such as crabgrass, unpaid bills, or bad schools.

So another fine point of problem solving is spotting the difference between these two kinds of problems when they both come down on you at once. Clearly, you should only lose sleep over problems you can personally do something about. Keep an eye on some of the others, however, because when things change they often change fast.

One major problem is that every problem has another problem behind it. And that problem has yet another problem behind it. And there are treacherous shoals here. When some people come up against this fact they throw up their hands because there are too many problems to get involved.

A skillful problem solver knows that problems of a feather flock together and that somewhere there's a head turkey. Solve that featherduster and they all fall into line. Like the lumberjack climbing over the log jam to find the key log that's jamming everything up.

Before you come up with a public communication plan, then, you should analyze your problems. That's technical talk for finding the head turkey or the key log or whatever.

There are as many ways to solve any given problem as there are problem solvers. You can go over problems, under problems, around problems, through problems, or you can ignore them altogether. The most elegant ploy of all, of course, is to redefine your problem so that it becomes an opportunity to solve other problems, but that's an advanced course.

The best way to solve a problem is the way that takes the least time, costs the least money, or

creates the smallest number of new problems. Your best solution may be better than the best that I can do -- but I may not have the resources to do it your way.

In this vein I won't try to tell you about your school problems, because I've got school problems of my own. But it's essential that you get to know your problems like a twin brother before you develop your public communication plan. Public communication is expensive and time consuming and it's a bummer to find out that the problem you think you've been addressing is not the real problem at all.

Here're a few questions that're worth toying around with: What causes this problem? What problems does it in turn cause? Is it a real problem, or a symptom of another problem? Who benefits from the problem? How? Who gets hurt by the problem? How? How did your problem come about? What have other people done about it in the past? What worked and what didn't and why? If you solve your problem, what other problems will take its place? How do you really feel about your problem?

Here's a powerful way to answer this last question: if someone were to give you money, how much would he have to offer to get you to forget about your problem altogether? This question is particularly penetrating, because the answer tells you how much time and effort you should be willing to put into solving the problem.

This brings up another inescapable fact of life: the solution to any problem takes time, money and information. Sometimes you can substitute extra quantities of one of these resources for the other two, but, without doubt, resources are definitely needed to solve any problem worth dealing with. With imagination you can sometimes motivate other people to use their resources, of course, but that, too, is an art in itself.

If you don't think you have enough resources to solve a particular problem, that's a respectable problem in its own right. Sometimes being short on resources is an advantage because it forces you to be more imaginative. Nevertheless, if you feel that information is a problem, go back to Facts For A Change. Another useful tool is Finding Facts: Interviewing, Observing, Using Reference Sources by William L. Rivers. Chapters seven and eight of this book will deal with time and money problems.

There's one resource that you won't want to do without, however. That's stubborn determination to see the job through.

Many of the problems you'll find in education are

not necessarily communication problems. You'll find money problems, legal problems, health problems, moral problems, safety problems, political problems.

Effective communication is probably necessary at some point to solve any one of these problems; indeed, to solve nearly any social problem you can name. But it's often not enough. Effective communication is not a good substitute for open-heart surgery, well-trained teachers or effective traffic laws and enforcement around your home and schools. Effective communication can:

a) Help you understand how other people think or feel and why they behave the way they do. Let's call this the listen/observe/learn solution;

b) Increase the amount of knowledge someone or some group of people has -- to inform;

c) Change attitudes or how people feel about something -- to persuade;

d) Motivate people to take action to change their ways -- to influence behavior.

In other words, heart surgeons replace defective hearts, but effective communication can keep your doctor abreast of the latest techniques.

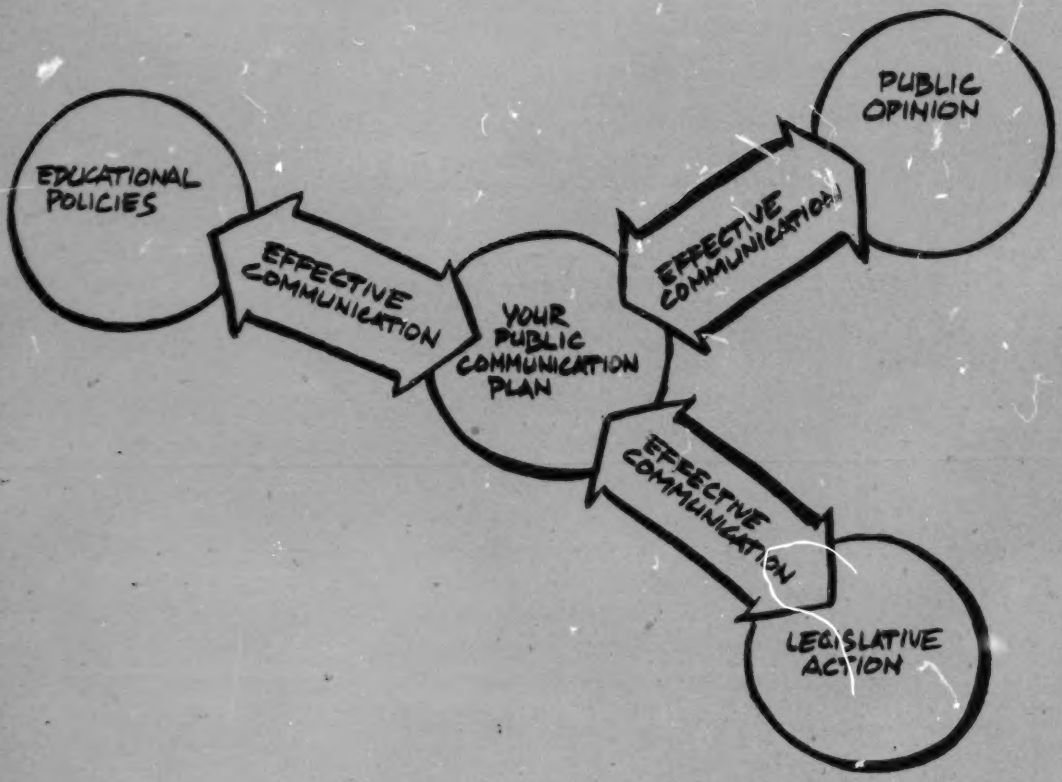
School principals can schedule parent workshops, but effective communication can help pass the word that gets parents to attend.

Legislators draft laws, but effective communication gives them sufficient information and motivation to do so responsively.

Campaign workers stuff envelopes with literature, but effective communication can motivate them to volunteer for the job.

In other words, before you hammer together your public communication plan, you should feel confident that you understand the difference between your communication problems (your need to know, inform, persuade, or influence behavior) and your many other educational problems. And you should know without a second thought how more effective communication can help you solve your other problems.

Here's a picture that may give you some food for thought:



So, find a problem -- a brooding, menacing knight of a problem that draws you up full measure -- an arrogant, mocking bully of a problem that you're not really quite sure you can whip. Then go after it!

But take a tip from Don Quixote. Stay away from windmills.

WHAT IS NEWS?

The dictionary defines news as:

a. Any report of a recent event or situation;
b. Current information about what is going on.

These definitions may seem rather broad, but the boundaries of news are broad. The variety is endless.

The value of news is based on its timeliness and its potential interest to the audience it is intended to reach. News informs, interests, and entertains. It provides people with facts and information about the world around them and helps them make life decisions. Key elements of news are:

A. Immediacy--News is the plural of new. Freshness counts.
B. Proximity--People are most interested in the problems and issues around them which affect their lives.
C. Prominence--Well-known people command public attention. Their opinions and statements are listened to.
D. Oddity--Strange, odd, and rare items are newsworthy.
E. Conflict--There is a streak in people that wants to learn about conflicts and battles. The conscientious newswriter treats conflict objectively.
F. Human emotion--Some news elicits emotional response from the reader. Romance, love, hate, humor "colors" news.
G. Consequences--Where does the news fit in the reader's life?

News is not just hard facts in chronological order. It is a readable description of important public events that answers the basic "who, what, where, when, why, and how" questions.

In a limited sense news is information an editor decides to print or broadcast. In a broader sense it is the pulse of public life.

Chapter 3

The whiz-bang, A-1, sure-fire influence machine

Machines do everything today -- squeeze lemons, sort mail, pilot space capsules.

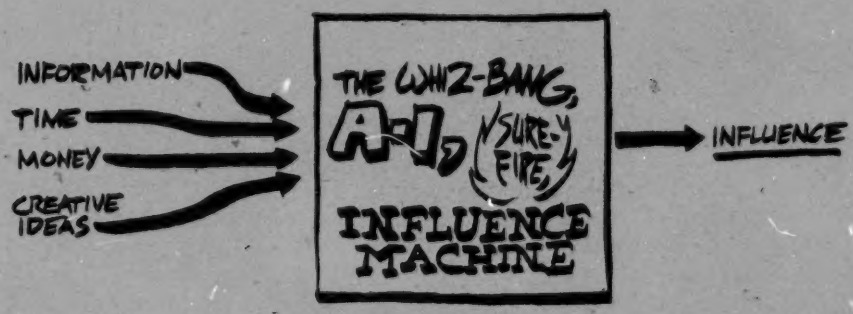
Here's a machine you can build at home in your spare time that'll help you solve nearly any public communication problem that comes your way.

Madison Avenue sharpies have been using gadgets like this for years to get you to buy laundry detergent, mutual funds and presidential candidates.

Admittedly, machines like this can be quite dangerous in unscrupulous hands. Already there're more of them around than "Saturday night specials." So it's about time good folks learn to use powerful tools like this to do useful stuff like improving education.

If you follow directions carefully, this machine is guaranteed to improve your public communication. Some people call it a public communication campaign organization, but I like to call it a whiz-bang, influence machine.

Before we lift the wraps, let's admire the sleek external lines.



On the surface, it's just an ordinary box. Henry Ford would have colored it black.

Into this box you put information, time, money, and creative ideas. You'll recognize these as the problem-solving resources we talked about in the last chapter. If you assemble your machine carefully and perform routine maintenance, you'll have a Volkswagon-type model that'll give you impressive resource mileage. If you're careless, however, these machines have been known to guzzle resources like thirsty pirates.

What this machine does for you, of course, is help solve your public communication problems. Indeed, you can add options to solve any public communication problem you can dream up. You can use it to increase membership in your organization, deliver important facts and ideas to other parents, put pressure on school boards, help elect political candidates, or raise money for your organization! Basically, you use this machine whenever you want to influence other people.

Let's talk about influence for a moment. Earlier in the book I suggested that whenever you want to change people you have to communicate. I further suggested that communication involves a talker and a listener. In public communication the listener may actually be 200 or 20 thousand or 200 million different people -- most of them perfect strangers! Indeed, when important people like the President of the United States or an Arab oil minister talk, people all over the world listen!

In the old days communicators called the people they thought were listening their audience. They thought that people listened automatically. They talked nonstop, in fact, and hardly even bothered to look up long enough to see if people were listening or not. This got them into all kinds of trouble, of course, because many people who were supposed to be in the audience didn't listen at all. Others only heard what they wanted to hear. Still others pretended to be listening, but totally misunderstood what the communicators were trying to say.

These days, communicators who stay on top of things realize that the whole communication process works better if the audience gets to talk some of the time too. They realize that even in public communication it's best if people take turns being listeners and talkers. This idea threatens some old-fashioned communicators. They're afraid that if they let the audience talk they might lose control and be influenced themselves. They think that influence is a one-way street. It's not, of course. And how sad

it is that they should give up this fine opportunity for new experience and growth!

I'm happy to say that audiences aren't as easily influenced as you might think. That's because audiences are made up of people like you and me. In fact, we belong to more audiences than you can shake a stick at. Just consider all the newspapers, magazines, television shows, radio commercials, roadside billboards and junk mail that comes our way each day. People on Madison Avenue like to think that audiences aren't very smart. They like to dream up all kinds of tricks and gimmicks to get audiences to accept and believe all kinds of nonsense. I believe that audiences are very smart. Can you imagine what a terrible world it would be if people swallowed all the stuff about tooth paste, deodorants, and chewing gum that the Madison Avenue fellows try to feed them?

My own feeling is that we should approach the problem of influencing audiences with respect, reverence, and love. Audiences seem to understand when we feel this way and are more likely to listen when our turn comes to talk.

Now, back to influence machines.

There are three ways you can influence your audience with an influence machine:

1) You can influence the quality of information they have about a given subject;

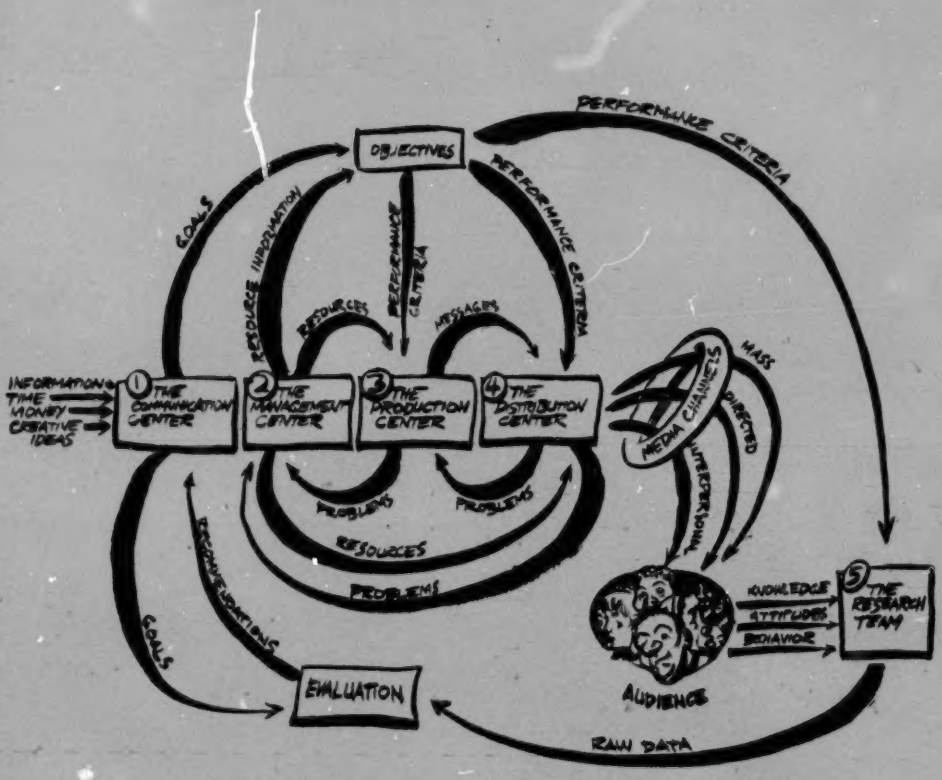
2) You can influence how they feel about the subject;

3) You can influence how they behave or act.

And you, of course, will be influenced by what your audience has to say in response to your campaign.

Before you think about building an influence machine of your own, you'll want to think carefully about your audience and how you want to influence it. The size and make-up of your audience, combined with the goals you set, will determine how your machine goes together and the mix and quantity of resources you'll need to make it work. In principle, however, all influence machines are similar, whether you're trying to influence 150 members of your parent-teacher organization to participate in a school clean-up day or a million citizens to vote for an important proposition on the state ballot. If you've worked with one model, any other version will be a snap to understand.

Let's take a look at a typical model. It looks pretty complicated, but if you just look at one part at a time you'll discover that there's really no mystery at all in how it's put together. It's basically wired with plain old common sense.



1. The Communication Center -- A race car is only as good as the driver. The same is true of an influence machine. Someone has to know what to do, when to do it, what changes to make when something goes wrong. The communication center is the driver's seat of your public communication machine. You, someone you appoint or hire, or a special public communication policy committee within your organization may sit in this seat. But it's important to have someone with a pretty cool head and fast reflexes in this position. Otherwise your influence machine will spin its wheels.

The communicator, the person who sits in the driver's seat, should bring three things to the job:

1) knowledge about the problem that needs to be solved;
the audience that must be reached;
the various skills and techniques of communication; and
broad overall knowledge of how the world works and what makes people tick;

2) personal talent for cutting through problems and a flair for getting people interested and excited about things;

3) the personal motivation to work long hours through adversity to solve the problem at hand.

The communicator should also know where to find the money necessary to run the influence machine, although substantial access to information, time, or creative ideas can substitute for this to some extent.

The communicator sets the goals for the influence machine; develops a broad policy to meet these goals; helps work out a plan to carry out the policy consistent with the information, time, money and creative resources at hand; and decides what to do when problems arise.

2. The Management Center -- This part of your influence machine works like an on-board computer. This computer decides who does what when, how much is needed in the way of resources to carry out each separate job, and monitors how well the various jobs are performed. All of these functions must be carried out within the broader framework of goals and policy developed by the communicator.

The two most important management jobs are:

1) To inform the communicator of what can be done realistically with the resources at hand and;

2) to provide early warning of problems within the campaign machine.

The management center, in other words, helps the communicator develop specific objectives for the campaign and each unit in the campaign organization; communicates these objectives to the production, distribution, and research centers; and monitors the progress of each unit toward its assigned objectives.

Sometimes this last role leads to a rather un-

pleasant task -- talking earnestly to people who aren't contributing what is necessary to realize campaign goals. Another unpleasant management task is paying overdue bills. If folks in the management unit are skillful at selecting and training people, communicating objectives, and budgeting money, these nasty jobs will seldom be encountered.

In a small campaign the communicator may also be part-time manager. In a large campaign there may be a whole management staff. Regardless of who does the job, however, good managers are part accountant, part salesman, part magistrate, and part father confessor. They're hard to come by.

Sometimes management people think they pilot the influence machine. They don't. That's the communicator's job. The role of the management center is to make the influence machine responsive to the communicator's slightest touch. A great deal of creativity is needed to do this, of course, but this creativity must be expressed within the goals and policies drawn up by the communicator.

Think of the manager as the conductor of a symphony. The score he follows is written by the communicator. Or, if you've ever watched Star Trek, think of Star Fleet Command and Captain Kirk as the communication center and Mr. Spock and all the people on the bridge of the Enterprise as the management team.

3. The Production Center -- Here is where a lot of fun stuff happens in a campaign. Every message intended for the audience is created and produced here. Often experts and specialists are hired for specific jobs. Production people take ordinary words and pictures and turn them into special messages calculated to influence your audience when communicated on paper, film or broadcast airwaves. Writers and editors work with words. Photographers and graphic artists work with pictures. Graphic artists also work with words, but they treat them like pictures. Directors, cameramen, actors, and editors work with television and motion pictures. The number of different specialists who may be called in to work in the production center is almost as large as the number of jobs the center is asked to do -- write speeches, press releases, fact sheets, television documentaries; design and lay out posters, brochures, newsletters; record public service announcements for radio; photograph banquet speakers for newsletters and magazines; produce conferences, motion pictures and television talk shows; etc.

Ideally production people have certain basic skills. Writing and graphic design sense are probably most important. But anyone with half a mind and ten fingers can do most of the simple jobs that go through production. And free-lance specialists are always

available to do the more demanding jobs. A good manager should know when it pays to bring in a specialist. If you need high-quality photography for publication, for example, it might pay to hire a professional.

The major problem with production people is that they sometimes think that they are artistes. Some writers are frustrated Tolstois, some artists are frustrated Picassos. Recognize that production people need creative latitude to do their jobs well, but don't let them pull the wool over your eyes. True professionals are well aware that their job is to get messages out that influence specific audiences in specific ways within specific time and money limitations. And they'll break their pencils to give you what you want.

4. The Distribution Center -- Distribution experts are often the unsung heroes of the influence game. Production people tend to get all the glory in public communication campaigns because they have, by nature of their work, the biggest egos. Distribution people, on the other hand, are often scholarly folks who enjoy reading small print in big books.

Without skillful distribution people, much of the work of the production types would never see the light of a TV tube or grace the pages of magazines and newspapers. Name any audience and good distribution people can tell you what sections of what newspapers they read, what magazines are most likely to be found on their coffee tables, what radio station they tune in to on the way to work, and what their favorite television programs are. They can also tell you which newspaper and magazine editors are looking for what stories, how to get your public service messages on the best radio and television stations, how much a billboard on the expressway will cost, and postal regulations for the large mailing you want to do.

Top-notch distribution people can tell you how to get reporters and television crews to cover your news conference, what day of the week to send out your press release, and, best of all, how to get media people to do your production for you! Yes, this is the magic secret of low-cost public communication -- learn how to make your messages look like news or interesting feature material for the print and broadcast media and you can get literally thousands of dollars of free time and space in the media!

There are three useful things to look for in people you're considering to run the distribution center: 1) experience with many different kinds of media; 2) familiarity with the six or seven indispensible media reference books (available in any good library, these books tell you more about audiences and media

organizations than you'll ever need to know -- more details in a later chapter); a great deal of common sense and a flair for organization.

Once again, the communicator may be responsible for distribution in a small campaign or there may be a professional staff in a larger organization. By the time you finish this book you should be able to think through many common distribution problems yourself. With experience of two or three campaigns, there's no reason why you can't be as good as the best in getting your story out.

The Media Channels and the Audience -- Your influence machine is designed to connect up with a large number of media channels that, in turn, reach people in your audience. Many of the things that happen after you put your messages into the channels are totally outside your control.

Communication research has shown that effective use of combinations of different media channels is

SOME SYMBOLS TO USE WHEN YOU EDIT COPY

awk.	Awkward. Poor choice of words.
	Word or letter should be capitalized.
	Should not be capitalized.
frag.	Sentence fragment poorly used.
ex.	For example
¶ or ⊥	Paragraph
pn	Punctuation
	Close up space, as in wri te
sp	Spelling
stet	Ignore correction
	Transpose (words, letters)--This is not the...
W	Too wordy. Condense.
~~This is~~	Delete. Don't need it.
SS	Sentence structure
tr	Transition
ag.	Agreement
ref.	Reference
M	Meaning
I.D.	Inadequate identification of person or place.
#	Space

more influential than use of a single channel. There are several reasons for this:

1) If one channel doesn't reach a particular group in your audience, another may.
2) Some kinds of information are more effectively presented in a visual medium such as film, television, or slide shows.
3) When you hear about something through two or more different media channels you tend to regard the message as more important than if you only hear about it through one channel.

There are three general types of channels you'll want to use -- mass media channels, more directed media channels, and face-to-face or interpersonal channels. Whenever possible it's best to try to talk to people face-to-face.

So, as a compromise, you use media channels. Some channels are more powerful than others. A national television network can reach 20 or 30 million homes simultaneously. It reaches rich people, poor people, young people, old people, Black people, white people, men, women, Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Southerners, Northerners. It's called a mass medium because it reaches a large mass of people of all different sorts. If you want to reach a large, general audience it's an ideal channel.

If you want to announce a parent-teacher meeting for your local school, however, a different channel is needed. For example,----. In between the face-to-face and mass media channels, then, are a large number of more directed channels. These go to specific, relatively defined groups of people -- your church newsletter, Skindiver magazine, the training films your automobile mechanic had to watch to learn how to fix your automatic transmission. Skillful use of these more direct, specialized media channels can lend enormous precision to your public communication campaign. You can reach just the people you want to reach and give them just the messages you want them to hear. Your communication works better and you save money.

At the end of your media channels there's an audience -- at least you hope there is. Audiences are groups of people. Like other groups of people, there are many reasons why audiences come together. They come together to be entertained, to learn, to support a political candidate, out of curiosity, because they're too lazy to change the channel, out of habit.

It's very important for you to know what your audience wants from the media channels it's using. People in your audience will be much more receptive to

your message if it meets their expectations and needs. If your message doesn't meet their expectations and needs, chances are they'll either turn you off or not even hear what you have to say to begin with. Audiences are fickle this way. They're also influenced by many things other than your message -- what their friends say, what they learned from parents and teachers, their economic self interest, their political beliefs, head colds, income taxes, etc.

Every person you talk to in your audience represents a whole committee of people both living and dead. If you understand this fact alone you're well on your way to becoming an effective public communicator. If you understand this fact you understand why different people respond in different ways to the exact same message. And you also understand why it's important for audiences to be able to talk back.

5) The Research Team -- It's difficult for audiences to talk back to a newspaper or television set,

WHEN WRITING, CONSULT THESE RESOURCES

1. Associated Press-United Press International Style Book -- This is the most widely-accepted newswriting style book. It contains both writing guides and rules pertaining to specialized subjects.
2. Elements of Style by Strunk and White -- a fine guide to basic writing do's and don'ts.
3. Webster's Dictionary -- The A to Z of words.

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but if your research team is doing its job they won't have to. There'll be other ways in which they can express what's on their minds. Research is the way you measure the effectiveness of your public communication campaign. Smart communicators think about the problem of measuring effectiveness of messages, media channels, and overall strategy right at the very beginning of the campaign. They like to test the effectiveness of messages before they're ever released to the audience; they like to test how well various media channels reach and influence various groups within their particular audience; they like to know as early as possible how audiences respond to their overall campaign approach.

Research is how you listen to your audience. Research is the instrument panel of your influence machine. If you don't evaluate your efforts to influence your audience through continual research, you're rowing a tiny boat in a vast dark sea without a compass. Professional advertising and public relations companies spend millions of dollars on research. Just because you don't have this kind of money doesn't mean you shouldn't put considerable creative thought into the problem of research.

Research may be as complicated as a scientific opinion survey such as a Gallup or Harris would do. Or it may be as simple as a note on the bottom of your newsletter asking for reader comments. But some form of research and evaluation procedure should be built into every campaign -- into every message if possible! Some low cost ways of doing this will be suggested in Chapter Nine. You have the choice of hiring specialists to help you do this, enlisting volunteer help from experts in business or universities, or doing it yourself.

Objectives -- Objectives and how you use them provide the navigational guidance your influence machine needs. This topic is so important, the whole next chapter is devoted to it. It is the most important chapter in the book.

The System -- Just because you have a pile of parts doesn't mean you have a watch. The way in which the parts are put together determines how well the watch keeps time. A collection of parts and a particular pattern for putting them together is called a system. In this chapter we have explored a public communication system. In the chapters that follow we'll go into details.

If you pay close attention to details, you'll have a smooth-running public communication system. Since the parts of this system are largely made up of people, your skill in organizing and motivating people to cooperate toward a common goal will substantially deter-

mind the success of your influence machine. In order to organize and motivate people in your campaign organization, of course, you have to communicate. To communicate effectively you'll need a plan... Wait! Rather than start all over at the beginning to talk about how to communicate effectively with people within your organization, let's just say that there're wheels within wheels within wheels!

Chapter 4

Objectives -- magic words that keep you out of downtown St. Louis

There's an old story that submariners tell about a bumbling navigation officer who was asked for a position fix by his skipper. He shuffled through his charts and scratched a few numbers in the margin of his comic book -- "The way I figure it," he said, "We're either 107 miles off the coast of New Zealand or in the middle of downtown St. Louis."

Talking to people you've never met who live in places you've never been is a lot like piloting a submarine under water -- you can't just look out the window to see where you're going. When you talk with people face-to-face you can monitor their expressions to see how they're responding to your ideas. But when you use newspapers, newsletters, posters, direct mail, magazines, radio, television or other public media to influence people, your message reaches them in the privacy of their homes, automobiles or commuter trains -- and who knows how they respond? They may think your newspaper story is just the thing to wrap old chicken bones for the garbage. Your television public service announcement may signal just the time for an expedition to the refrigerator. An interested listener on the turnpike may be distracted by an angry motorist arguing with his horn at just the instant you make your most telling point on the radio talk show.

Just because you've put your message into the media, in other words, you can't sit back smugly with a smile on your face. For all you know there's no one on the other end, and if there is, they may not understand a word of what you have to say or even care.

In this light, it's no wonder that many would-be

public communicators start out for the exotic shores of New Zealand and end up in downtown St. Louis! This is often the fate that befalls one-way communicators -- the people who think that effective communication is sending out reams of press releases or publishing fancy booklets and letting it go at that. This approach is as sensible as the submarine captain signaling full ahead to the engine room and then retiring to his cabin for a nap, leaving the brige unattended. Like the submarine, your influence machine is next to useless without skillful piloting and navigation -- and just about as dangerous.

This chapter is about navigation -- how to assure that your influence machine takes you where you want to go despite buffeting winds, waves, tides and undersea explosions. Well-stated objectives provide the basis for successful navigation in public communication.

HOW TO WRITE A NEWS RELEASE

Writing a news release is a skill, and a great deal of skill is needed to get a release read and published. Before you read any further, remember this: any editor of any newspaper receives thousands of news or publicity releases each year. Every time you sit down to type out a release, you're entering a contest of skill, competition, and reward. What are your chances of winning? If you're skillful high; if not, low.

A news release is planned news. An announcement of new officers--anything that is NEWS within your organization may be the main ingredient for a good news release, provided that it is important to the general audience of the news media you're aiming for.

Your job is to recognize the news within your organization and to write it so that an editor will read and publish it.

Releases that aren't used are rejected for a variety of reasons. Sometimes they're not newsworthy, or are competing with more important items for limited space. Too frequently, however, the problem isn't content, but style.

All news releases follow a similar form. Here are some guidelines to assure that your presentation gets printed:

1. Identification -- If you don't have letterhead to use for your news releases, be sure your organization's name, address, and phone number are all included in the upper lefthand corner of the page.
2. Disposition -- The disposition tells the editor when the release should be published. The time, day, date, and year should appear in capital letters four spaces under the last line of the identification. If the time of release doesn't matter, FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE should be

For starters, think about an objective as a specific destination or port-of-call. An objective tells you where you want to be when.

You develop objectives by first thinking about your goals. Very likely your goal is to solve the problem you've been thinking about -- improve schools, assure that your child gets a good education, open up educational decision making to citizen participation, etc. These are certainly worthwhile ambitions. They can, in fact, be very inspiring to other people in your community. For this reason alone broadly-stated goals are useful.

If you're really going to set out to accomplish your goals, however, you have to stop talking and start acting. This suggests that you have to make decisions about how to act. And at this point you'll find that it's essential to have guidelines to help you make correct decisions. And you'll also find at this stage that broadly-stated goals don't give you clear guidelines for action. You need something more specific.

You want to improve the schools, for example. How do you do this? Do you begin a volunteer program? Do you work for change in curriculum? Do you build new buildings? Do you hire more qualified teachers? Do you increase the budget? Without clear guidelines it almost doesn't matter which course you take. Any one of these actions may improve things to a certain extent, but not perhaps in the ways you really had in mind.

Broadly-stated goals are the strange dark shores that pull you irresistably. If you want to get safely into port, however, you need well-placed beacons and bell bouys to guide you through the treacherous foreign waters. You need specific stated objectives.

You can think of an objective as a beacon that keeps you out of troubled waters. There are two parts to a well-stated objective. One part describes a specific point of progress that you wish to attain through your efforts. The other part describes the specific time, date, or deadline by which you want to reach it.

"Vacation in California," is an example of a goal statement. "Arrive in San Francisco at 7:00 pm on March 23," is an objective.

"Increase membership," is a goal; "Install 50 new members by the June conference," is a well-stated objective.

Ideally your objectives should be so specific that a total stranger, knowing nothing more than wha

you've written into your list of objectives, can at the proper time judge precisely your degree of progress toward your goal.

In public communication goals and objectives are stated in terms of influence: "Inform the public about the bill," is an example of a goal statement for an information campaign; "Eighty per cent of the registered voters in Glenville can identify the key issue of the bill by September 15," is an example of an objective.

Or, if the aim of your campaign is to influence attitudes, your objectives might be, "Seventy per cent of the registered voters in Glenville in favor of the bill by October 15."

If you want to influence behavior: "Fifty-one per cent of the people who vote in the election vote 'yes' on the bill."

Actually, your campaign may be built around all

(continued)

written instead.

3. Slug -- Sometimes, but not always, a brief, one-line summary of the release is included just before the story itself to give the editor some indication of its content.
4. Copy -- Copy should be straight news style with an informative "who, what, when, where," lead sentence. If the lead sentence doesn't catch and hold the interest of the editor, the release will be thrown away.

News releases can be used for many purposes. Some will publicize events your organization is sponsoring. Others will announce new products or techniques. Personnel changes in your organization may be good subjects for local papers.

Make sure your release reaches the appropriate media person. Science items go to science editors, education items to education editors, society items to society editors.

Bring the news to a tight conclusion. Sum up all your points. Include a telephone number where someone can call for further information.

Some news releases will spark enough interest for the media to do a story themselves. Some will get a few lines in the paper. Some will be thrown away.

But don't get discouraged. Keep trying. Don't go overboard, however. Only bother the editors when you have real news.

Laurie Beckelman

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three of these objectives. First you want to inform people of the issues in the election. Then you want to influence the attitudes of a large segment of the voters. Finally you want to influence a majority of voters to vote a particular way -- you want to influence behavior.

Realistically a public communication campaign follows a long chain of objectives much as a cruise ship follows a preplanned itinerary. This means that if you fail to attain early objectives, you have advance warning that you're headed off course. If, in the example given above, voters do not understand the issues by September, you have early warning that your public communication campaign is not working effectively. Yet at this early stage, you still have time to review and revise your campaign strategy and save the outcome of the election. Without the early-warning signal provided by your first objective, you may continue complacently into the election unaware that you're headed toward disaster.

People sometimes confuse jobs that need to be done and objectives. If you tell me to write a press release you're giving me a job to do. If you tell me to have the press release written by five o'clock you're giving me an objective. The difference may seem minor, but it's very important. Jobs or tasks take time and require resources. Objectives are specific points of progress -- you've either arrived or you haven't.

A great deal of confusion arises if you tell me to write a press release but don't tell me that you expect the job to be done by five o'clock. I may think that I don't have to even start the job until five o'clock or later. Starting a job and finishing it, of course, are two different matters. So, if we want to develop intelligent indicators of our progress, we need to define specific points of accomplishment. This is why well-stated objectives are often phrased in the past tense: "Committee members informed by...," "Budget plan approved by...," "Positive attitudes formed by..."

Realism is another important feature of well-stated objectives. You should also have confidence that your objectives can be attained with reasonable expenditure of time and money. Unrealistic objectives frustrate people. Attainable objectives inspire people. Objectives that are not reached despite all-out effort tend to throw people into despondency, whereas hard-won accomplishments elate them and give them fresh energy for the next challenge.

For any given effort, then, there should be some point where you can say that you've accomplished all that you want to accomplish, roll down your sleeves,

and go out to celebrate a job well done. The final objective that allows you to do this is called your terminal objective. Many intermediate objectives may lead up to this point, but the terminal objective defines the final destination or point of accomplishment of a particular phase of work. A terminal objective marks a major plateau, in other words, a point where you go on to other problems.

In your work to improve the schools you'll have particular political objectives -- form a parent advisory group, change the balance of power on the school board, increase the budget for special programs, etc. In order to reach these political objectives, you may have to attain certain communication objectives. When you've finished the communication phase and are ready to start other tasks, you can say that you've reached the terminal objectives of your public communication campaign. The fact that you've reached your terminal communication objective, then, doesn't necessarily mean that you've reached your political

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

From: Laurie Beckelman

For: McLean Hospital
115 Mill Street
Belmont, MA 02178
(617) 855-2112

March 25, 1976

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Do you ever use aspirin or cold pills? Nodoz or Valium? If so, "The Use and Abuse of Everyday Drugs," a free lecture at McLean Hospital, Belmont, Tuesday, April 6, 8:00 p.m., will provide information you should have.

The speaker will be Dr. Jonothan O. Cole, Director of Education and Training at McLean's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Center, and co-author of a book on pharmacology for the general public.

Dr. Cole will use examples such as aspirin, lithium, and penicillin to talk about these areas of concern. For further information on "The Use and Abuse of Everyday Drugs," fourth in a series of lectures for the general public sponsored by McLean, call 855-2112. # # #

objectives, but it does mark the completion of a major phase of work toward that end.

In public communication campaigns terminal objectives are most usefully stated in terms of pre-defined increases in knowledge or changes in attitude and/or actions of people within your audience. This suggests that you have to measure knowledge, attitude and/or behavior before you even begin your campaign. This provides a base-line. Given this, you can define your campaign objectives in terms of change in the knowledge that people have, how they feel, and/or how they behave with regard to your problem.

Think of your public communication campaign as a scientific experiment. First you measure or describe knowledge, attitudes, or behavior within your audience; then you try to change one or more of these variables through your campaign; and finally you measure again to see how successful your efforts were. You hope, of course, that the results of your second measurement meet the criteria for success defined by your objectives. If not, you try another campaign with a different approach. In this sense the plan you develop to accomplish your terminal objectives is like the scientist's hypothesis -- you say in effect that if you carry out your campaign plan you will bring about the changes you want in your audience. The actual campaign, then, is like an experiment that tests your plan.

The problem of how to measure knowledge, attitudes and behavior is another matter. Chapter Nine will cover this problem in some detail. But for now let's say that a scientific survey is probably the most accurate method and the most expensive, but other techniques are available if you don't mind giving up precision and working with less trustworthy information.

Here's an example of how the goals and terminal objectives for a specific campaign might be phrased;

GOAL

Raise campaign funds for our school board candidate

FUND-RAISING OBJECTIVE

$20,000 raised by July 15

COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVE

1,000 potential contributors informed of the testimonial dinner by June 15. Success will be measured by a random-sample telephone survey.

Well-stated objectives serve several vital purposes in your communication planning: 1) Thinking them through helps you clarify for yourself what needs to be done in what priority; 2) Clear statement helps you communicate to others what needs to be done; 3) Well-stated objectives provide benchmarks to help make optimal decisions about how to use limited time and money resources; 4) Objectives provide criteria for performance so you can judge the effectiveness of various people and units working on the campaign as well as the effectiveness of the campaign itself.

See you in New Zealand!

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you represent a non-profit organization, you can get free 10-second, 30-second, or 60-second spot announcements on radio or television! To qualify for public service time your organization must:

1. Be non-profit.
2. Must not have advertising funds available or use paid media.
3. Must not make political announcements.
4. Must be credible in the judgement of station management.

Each station has its own public service policy and standards. Contact the public service directors of the stations in your area to find out how you can take advantage of public service time.

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Chapter 5

Analyze your audience -- some of the nicest people around are perfect strangers

The fastest way to tell an amateur from a pro in the communication business is to ask about the audience. An amateur will peer at you with "puzzled dimness," then mutter something like, "Everybody...We've got to reach everybody we can. Now, about the design for this newsletter..."

Amateur communicators have infinite faith that you can put round pegs into square holes. You can't, of course. And that's why many amateurs go away mad when their communication efforts fail.

The truth of the matter is that the more you know about your audience, the more successful your communication efforts will be. Think of it this way. It's certainly easier to talk with your best friend than a Lebanese immigrant who hasn't mastered English. With your friend you share a common language and many mutual experiences. You know his likes and dislikes and what his various seemingly noncommittal gestures and nods really mean. You know that it's impossible to talk with him at all before he's had his morning coffee, but you also know that if you catch him after a fine meal you can get him to agree to anything.

You don't have enough common ground with the Lebanese immigrant, on the other hand, to tell him how to find the bus stop, much less explain complicated education issues.

When amateur communicators fail to analyze their audiences before launching their campaigns, they might as well talk with so many Lebanese immigrants. Every message is a round peg in a world of square holes.

Let's define an audience. An audience is a group of people you want to influence through public communication. The group may be as small as 10 or 12 people or as large as 250 million or more.

The first thing you want to know about people in your audience is where to find them. Do they all live in your neighborhood, your city, your state? Are some in San Francisco and some in New York? Are they concentrated in one area or scattered about the country?

These questions are important because they help define the geographic limits of your campaign. If you want to publicize a candidate's night in Fort Lee, New Jersey, you certainly don't want to send your news release to a Fort Hamilton, New York, newspaper.

It's also useful to know how many people are in your audience. If you have an audience of millions, you need powerful mass media such as network television to get your message across. If it's just the garden club, on the other hand, a few well-placed telephone calls might suffice. It's also useful to know how many people are in your audience if you're printing pamphlets, brochures or newsletters. Print too many and you're wasting trees, ink, and money unnecessarily. Print too few and your message either fails to reach enough people, or you have to go back for an expensive second printing.

Next, it's valuable to define the characteristics which identify a given individual as a member of your audience. Perhaps you want to reach registered voters, or parents, or state legislators, or elementary teachers, or women over 25, or male Protestants. By answering this question you establish social limits or boundaries on your campaign and help make the task of designing messages and choosing media channels much simpler.

The fourth task of audience analysis is to identify the significant groups <u>within</u> your audience. There is a tendency for amateur communicators to talk about <u>the</u> audience as though <u>it</u> was a giant beast with a mind of <u>its</u> own -- <u>it</u> likes; <u>it</u> responds; <u>it</u> knows... It's quite dangerous to let this assumption creep under the wall of your tent. An audience is really a collection of totally unique individual human beings. Each person has his or her own likes, dislikes, needs, expectations. Some people in the audience share similar interests and characteristics with others, and some people will influence how others respond to your messages. But generally you'll have a wide range of interests, backgrounds and tastes represented in your audience.

If you talk about <u>the</u> audience, in other words,

you may be totally ignoring or misrepresenting large numbers of people who don't conform to the average or norm you ascribe to your audience as a whole. Just ask yourself how well the word "parent," or "motorist," or "voter," or "consumer" describes you as a whole person.

A related assumption you must avoid like tainted fish is the idea that people in the audience know what you know, care about the same things you care about, act the same way you would act in a given situation. People share many ideas, feelings and experiences, of course, but there are also significant differences within any group. If you assume similarities where differences exist, you run into trouble before you start. It's better to assume that differences exist and find out through audience research that there are similarities than assume similarity and find out about crucial differences through an expensive campaign failure.

It's usually impossible, of course, to cater to the needs or preferences of every person in a large group. But you can compromise. You do this by thinking of your audience as a number of segments or smaller audiences -- each audience segment made up of people who share important defining qualities. Think of sorting out a box of buttons -- big ones and small ones, red ones and blue ones, plastic ones and metal ones.

If you are trying to reach registered voters in Fort Lee, New Jersey, for example, you may find it quite useful to segment the audience on the basis of income; educational level; racial, religious, ethnic group; political affiliation. Groupings along social characteristics such as these are quite powerful for two reasons. 1) Considerable information is available about people in these various groups through the U.S. Census and other sociological studies published by various governmental and private organizations. 2) Knowledge of a person' age, education, income, sex, religion, racial identity, and political affiliation often help you predict with astounding accuracy that person's patterns of media use and attitudes toward various issues. You wouldn't expect your family doctor to read confession magazines, for example, or a teenager to read Nation's Business.

Actually, there are two important reasons for segmenting your audience. 1) Sometimes you want to say totally different things to different groups. If you are concerned about bicycle safety, for example, you'll want to say one thing to motorists and something quite different to kids who ride bikes. 2) You may want to say the same thing to the different groups, but because of differences of outlook and media use you have to use different wording, appeals, or even different

media channels to get your message across successfully.

This last point can't be over emphasized. The more convincingly you "talk the language" of a given individual in your audience, the more likely that person is going to hear and be influenced by your message. If you have college professors and truck drivers in your audience, you'll be most successful if you tailor special messages for each group -- pernaps find an impressive truck driver to carry the message to his colleagues and a coherent Ph.D. to spread the word to the professors. In each case your basic message is the same, but you word it quite differently for each group and send it through quite different channels.

Once you've determined the major segments within your audience, there are several important things you need to know. First, you want to know what people in each group know, how they feel and how they behave toward your problem. The reason for this is obvious. If people know nothing about the problem

NEVER WRITE WITHOUT FIRST RESEARCHING YOUR SUBJECT

There are four major categories of research:

1. Observation -- Just look around and note what is going on. Make notes on what you see and feel. If you're doing a story on education, for example, you would certainly want to spend time in a school.
2. Library research -- Get to know the standard reference sources. Know how to use files.
3. Interviews -- For your education story, talk with principals, teachers, students, parents. Interviews should be carefully planned so you know what questions to ask.
4. Scientific methods -- include controlled observation, experiments, surveys.

To be a competent researcher you need three basic skills:

1. You need to know how to ask questions at the right time and place to get the facts you need.
2. You need to know how to organize facts coherently.
3. You need to know how to communicate what you learn effectively in both written and spoken form.

Mastery of these skills and use of the applicable research methods will enable you to become an "expert" on your subject in a very short time.

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that concerns you, you have to bring them up to date with background information. If they are quite knowledgeable, on the other hand, you can skip the preliminaries and get on with what's on your mind. If people have no feelings one way or another about your problem, it's relatively easy to influence them in your direction. If they already have strong feelings in your favor, you certainly don't want to waste time or money trying to convert them, because it's unlikely you'll be successful. At most you want to try to disarm them so they don't mobilize against you.

Another part of this task is to determine the vested interests people in each group have with regard to various aspects of your problem. It's unlikely that you'll successfully convince teachers to take a cut in pay or administrators to eliminate their own jobs or retired folks that property taxes should go up to improve the schools. The beliefs and attitudes that people have are found rather securely by their own vested interests. In the rare cases where they see the other point of view philosophically, they'll find many reasons not to act in conflict with their own vested interests. By determining the vested interests of various people in your audience, you also determine potential sources of opposition.

In addition to vested interests, you need to know about the organized group memberships of various people in your audience. What professional, civic, religious, political, recreational associations or organizations do people in your audience belong to? This is an important question for two reasons. 1) The beliefs, attitudes and behavior that people disply are strongly influenced by the organizations they belong to. New information may be consciously or unconsciously evaluated in terms of group values -- "What will the boys down at Jay Cees think about this?" 2) Sometimes you can outreach and influence in doing so. Where this is possible you can think of yourself as a catalyst -- you invest a small amount of time or effort into persuading the decision-makers in a large, influential organization to put substantial resources behind your campaign; maybe even take it on as their own task so that you can go on to other things.

Similarly, it's useful to know about various infleuntial or admired individuals within each group in your audience. People may be influential because they hold formal leadership roles, or because they have strong or noteworthy personalities. In either case, if you get these people behind you, they in turn may influence many other people. This is why endorsements of prominent, elite or influential people are invaluable assets in public communication. Keep in mind that most prominent people have both admirers and detractors. Make sure your "big names"

are truly admired and followed within the group you want to reach. Know too that if you step on the toes of certain people in any group, they can effectively thwart your efforts. Know your audience well enough to avoid slighting these key people.

The final step in your audience analysis is to find out all you can about the media-use patterns and habits of people within each audience segment you have identified. What part of what newspapers, what magazines, radio stations, television programs reach and influence people in your audience? What do people in your audience expect from the various media they use -- general background, specific life-support information, entertainment, serious analysis and commentary, social tidbits?

The reason for this phase of your audience analysis is that people form persistant media-use habits. If you are going to reach and influence them, you have to use the media they use in a way that is generally consistent with their needs and expectations. You wouldn't expect a school administrator to read a magazine for plumbers, for example, or a member of the school board to watch Saturday morning cartoons.

Effective audience analysis is perhaps the most challenging campaign planning task of all. You have two things working against you from the start. First, you seldom have enough time or money to get the comprehensive, reliable information that you'd really like to have. Second, you're usually anxious to get on with the creative work of designing and distributing messages. The time and money you put into audience analysis will be returned many times over, however, and the knowledge you gain will make it much easier to design messages and distribution plans that really work.

Where do you get the information you need to analyze your audience? There are four possibilities: 1) You make it up. 2) You ask other people. 3) You get it out of books. 4) You do your own basic research. Some of these possibilities are more easily available than others and some will give you more accurate and complete information. Some sources will be more valuable than others.

You collect information about your audience to help make more intelligent decisions about message design and distribution.

A decision is a choice between two or more courses of action. Any course of action you choose can turn out positively or negatively. If it turns out positively you "win;" if it turns out to be a mistake you "lose." You may "win" success in your actions; you may "lose" time, money, prestige, and/or self-confidence.

Generally speaking, the more information you have about a situation, and the more accurate your information, the more likely it is that you will make a "winning" decision.

As a rule, the more complete and accurate the information you need, the more time and money it will take to collect. This suggests that the time and money you invest in collecting information should be determined by how much you have to gain by a winning decision balanced against how much you stand to lose by a decision that doesn't work out. Some people, of course, are naturally more willing to take risks than others, so they're willing to make decisions on the basis of less complete or accurate information about a given situation. Nevertheless, decisions have to be made in any public communication effort, so you should think carefully about how you are going to collect information and how you are going to evaluate it for completeness, accuracy, and relevance.

Let's look at our four sources in these terms:

MAKE IT UP

The fact that you've had life experience with many different kinds of people can be useful to you as you analyze your audience. You are relying on your own experience and stereotypes to make judgements about your audience. Some communicators are quite skillful at this. They seem to have fine instincts or intuitions. There is a danger in this approach, however. Generally, the more strongly you feel about something, the more biased your judgements about other people will tend to be. Using your own judgement about such audiences just may put you in the position of the man who tries self-hypnosis to cure his neuroses -- he may be getting treatment from a quack.

So, if a great deal rides on the success of your campaign, it's probably better to use a more reliable objective source of information than your own head.

ASK OTHER PEOPLE

This source of information about audiences is quite productive if you go to people who really know. Otherwise you might be relying on someone else's biases and misinformation.

The people who know might include other people who've planned and carried out public communication campaigns directed toward the sample you want to reach; professionals in the media that serve the groups you want to reach; political or other community leaders; professional researchers in business, government or universities; community workers such as clergy,

social workers, bartenders, policemen, medical clinicians, taxi-drivers. Whenever you rely on an expert, of course, you have to determine how much they know, the accuracy of their knowledge, how much they're telling, and if they're telling the truth. By talking to many different people you can sometimes cross check the facts that various people give you.

When you have to gather information about an audience, it's generally useful to assume that someone in your city has a file drawer filled with all the information you want. By calling the people you think are most likely to have this information, you can often hook into a network of knowledgable people in just a few phone calls.

The next trick is to use tact and charm to convince the experts to make their knowledge available to you. You're most likely to get results if you do your homework and collect the obvious information in the library first and then use this information to ask intelligent questions. This brings us to the third source.

CALENDAR LISTINGS: WHAT, HOW, WHEN, AND WHERE

WHAT

The calendar listing is a brief who-what-why-where-when notice of any event of public interest your organization is sponsoring. It can be used to publicize either one-time, dated events, such as workshops, lectures, or fundraisers, or to remind the public about on-going programs.

HOW

A calendar listing is:

a. Triple spaced.
b. Located one-third of the way down the page to leave room for an editor's notes.
c. As brief as possible. A string of the bare facts--event, date, time, place, price and information number is best. If you must include more information, keep it short.
d. End of notice is indicated by "-30-" or " # # # ".
e. Be sure to include a telephone number, name of organization, and when you want the listing to appear.

The more a calendar listing conforms to a paper's style, the less work for the editor and the more likely it is that it will be printed.

WHEN

Listings should be mailed to reach the editor two weeks before the date you want the listing to appear. Check copy deadlines on magazines, journals, and newsletters.

WHERE

Most papers have calendar listings. Find out just what each paper will or will not accept.

Laurie Beckelman

GET IT OUT OF BOOKS

When you get to the library, one of the first places to check is the U.S. Census. Most good libraries will have up-to-date census reports for the local area. Sometimes they'll have complete reports for the whole country. You may need help from the reference librarian to read all the tables, but you can get enormously detailed information about people in your community from the Census. Statistical facts are issued on areas as small as a single city block up to summaries for the whole nation.

A thorough census is conducted in the United States every 10 years. Statistical updates are released even more often. A diligent effort is made to determine descriptive facts about every man, woman, and child in the country such as age, sex, income, level of education, race, circumstances of housing. This information is organized, tabluated, and reported for different geographical areas. The Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) is a valuable population unit for a communicator. This is a major population center, including a core city and surrounding suburban communities. A SMSA will in turn be broken down into census tracts, each of which will include several square blocks.

Careful scanning of Census tables can help you determine how many people live in a given area and how they are distributed by sex, age, income, education, etc. These facts, in turn, can be correlated with what you know about media use and political attitudes.

If your library doesn't have the Census reports, check a university library, your nearest U.S. Government bookstore (often found in Federal Regional Centers around the country), or write to the U.S. Superintendent of documents in Washington, D.C., for information about what's available, how it's broken down, and how much it costs.

Your local radio and television stations are also treasuries of useful information about your community. Broadcasters provide two resources: first, their advertising sales department can give you all kinds of statistics about who listens to or watches what when in the community. Some of this information is collected by reputable broadcast rating services and some of it is rather self-serving, biased sales hype. Taken judiously, it's all valuable. Secondly, the broadcast stations are required by the Federal Communication Commission to file a "community ascertainment report" as part of their three-year license renewal procedures and to keep a copy of this report available for public inspection at the station. This ascertainment report

is a very thorough analysis of the community served by the station including detailed statistics and thorough interviews with a wide range of community leaders. An effort must be made to identify and report major community concerns in the ascertainment report, so you can often get a good picture of the temper of the community on various issues.

According to the FCC, the station is obliged, if you ask, to provide you with a copy of this report for a nominal copying fee.

You certainly shouldn't overlook the other media organizations in your community. Your local newspaper may have detailed readership information gathered through scientific surveys. The companies that sell space on billboards or transit cards (the ads you see on the bus or on the top of taxis) will have sales-oriented information about the people they reach and influence.

From: Laurie Beckelman

For: McLean Hospital
115 Mill Street
Belmont, Mass. 02178
(617) 855-2112

March 23, 1976

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lecture Listing

THE USE AND ABUSE OF EVERYDAY DRUGS. Dr. Jonathan O. Cole will deliver the fourth in a series of lectures on mental health for the general public. The lecture, sponsored by McLean Hospital, will be held Tuesday, April 6, 8:00 p.m., at Pierce Hall, Administration Building, McLean Hospital, 115 Mill Street, Belmont, MA. Telephone: 855-2112. FREE.

-30-

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In addition to the media organizations, many businesses and governmental agencies collect social statistics in your community. School departments, social service agencies, public transportation agencies, your Chamber of Commerce, religious groups, and university sociology, economics, or political science departments all like to collect social statistics. Advertising agencies and marketing consultants are also likely to know a great deal about your community. They are likely inclined to sell such information rather than give it away -- unless you can convince them that they are performing a noble public service (and can get valuable publicity) by helping you with your campaign.

Persistent bird-dogging and tactful requests for access usually result in more information than you really need. The trick is to sort out what you need from what you don't and to evaluate the various items of information in terms of timeliness, completeness, and accuracy. And while you're going through the travails of gathering information, don't lose sight of the forest for the trees. You only want to bother with those items of information that will help you make better decisions about how to design your messages and deliver them through the media. Don't lose sight of the fact that all the cold numbers in the Census broadcast ratings, or readership surveys are about real human beings. This is why it's also useful to do some of your own basic research.

YOUR OWN BASIC RESEARCH

This is where you talk with, listen to, and observe people in your audience first-hand. There's really no substitute for this method of gathering audience information, provided you make vigorous efforts to avoid selective perception, self-deception, and other sources of bias. Your research can be very casual -- listening to and talking with people at public meetings, on the street, or at social gatherings. Or, it can be a rigorously scientific public opinion poll. There are advantages to both approaches, as well as pitfalls.

Informal listening and talking helps you form a qualitative sense of what's on people's minds and how they feel about various issues. More, it gives you a first-hand sense of your audience when you write or prepare messages for your campaign. This is one thing cold statistics can never help you with. The danger of the informal approach, however, is that you end up talking with your friends. Even when you talk with people who have different ideas than you do, there is a danger that you will misperceive their ideas, thinking that they are either much closer to your own or much more alien than they really are.

A scientific survey overcomes these problems by forcing you to think carefully about who you talk with and compelling you to talk with a representative cross-section. It makes you ask questions in such a way that you minimally influence the answers and interpret the answers in the most objective way possible. Scientific surveys, however, require technical know-how, as well as considerable time and resources to carry out. If a great deal is riding on the outcome of your campaign, you should not think twice about trying to get the technical help and resources you need to collect hard scientific information about your audience.

Thorough audience analysis is not an easy chore, but it's worth considerable time and money if done properly. The solid information you gain through your audience analysis makes it possible for you to design messages that truly influence. You will know which media channels reach the people you want to reach. Anything else is a pure waste of time and money. Careful audience analysis is like plumbing the depth of a pond before diving off a high rock -- it greatly reduces the chances of coming up with mud on your face.

Chapter 6

The moonshot strategy -- how to outsmart old Phineas Taylor

Circus impresario P.T.Barnum used to complain that half the money spent on advertising was wasted -- he just didn't know which half.

There are three good reasons why you can do much better than old P.T. with your public communication. First, far more is known today about how public communication works. You don't have to bumble around with out-moded techniques that really didn't work all that well in the first place. Second, you can talk more directly with people you want to talk with through channels of communication that didn't exist in Barnum's days. Finally, rather than making the same mistakes over and over again, you can use modern communication research techniques to put your finger on muddled messages and arteriosclerotic channels.

Barnum used the shotgun strategy of communication and used it well -- put out the message as loudly as possible, as often as possible, through as many channels as possible. If you are unable to take advantage of up-to-date communication theory, specialized channels, and modern communication research, this method works pretty well. The only problem is that you need a circus tent full of money and the energy of a roustabout.

But this is the space age. Can you image what our space program would have been like if the boys at NASA had used the shot gun strategy? Scrap dealers' paradise!

Today, every message has a purpose and every channel is carefully chosen to deliver that message where it will do the most good. Successful communicators today use the moon-shot strategy. That is, they

tailor every message as precisely as possible for specific audience segments and send them out through carefully chosen channels at strategically selected times. The difference is something like dialing random numbers on the telephone at all hours of the day and night to reach a friend versus dialing the correct number at a time when you know your friend will be home.

The moon-shot approach may sound complicated, but it's really only common sense. Like anything worth doing, it requires research, thinking, and planning. And, like taming lions or walking a tightrope, you have to look before you leap. But in the long run your preplanning will pay off in spades by putting you closer to your goals faster with less wasted time and money than any other approach. Indeed, if the moonshot strategy had been invented 150 years ago, you can bet your bowtie that old Phineas Taylor would have been first on the bandwagon.

The moon-shot strategy is based on the following question: What am I going to say to whom, when, how, to accomplish what?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT. . .

1. Everything you do as a communicator has consequences -- even if you communicate nothing. You want to maximize the favorable consequences and minimize the unfavorable.
2. You should "speak the language" of your audience -- in each message you should use language style, examples, and images that are familiar to your specific audience and appropriate to the occasion. If you are trying to reach an audience that is culturally very different from you, find a spokesperson who can bridge the gap. Also, try to put all ideas and messages into a frame of reference that is comfortable to people in your audience.
3. You should strive for clarity in your messages -- drawing where appropriate on well-established techniques for assuring effective communication in written, spoken, and visual presentation.
4. If you want to change attitudes or behavior, you should strive to reach your objective through a series of small incremental steps rather than expect large dramatic changes in short periods of time.
5. You should use redundancy -- repeat each message often; re-state your main points several different ways within each message if possible; use several different communication channels for each message.
6. Messages tend to gain credibility and influence as they reach people through several different media--so use a multimedia approach.

(continued)

If you've done your homework with objectives and audience analysis, you've already answered the "to whom" and "to accomplish what?" parts of the question. In developing your communication strategy you are primarily concerned about what to say (content of your message); when (timing of delivery); and how to get it across (media channels through which to convey the message).

Your communication strategy is like the blueprint for a bridge. You want to get from one bank (where you are now) to another (your terminal objective) in the safest, surest, most economical and efficient manner.

The plan for a bridge must consider the nature of normal traffic as well as the possibility of freak high winds or treacherous flood currents. Similarly, your communication plan must take into account the routine communication problems that face you as well as the remote but possible pitfalls that can confront you in the course of your campaign.

To assure a safe bridge, you must build it on sound pilings that penetrate bedrock. In the same way, your communication plan must be based on sound ideas. Noted communication theorist Wilbur Schramm has pointed out four bedrock conditions that any communication campaign must meet in order to be successful:

1) Your messages must reach the intended people in your audience and stand out above the hubbub of competing messages to capture and hold their attention.

2) Your message must be understood by people in your audience.

3) Your messages must relate to material or psychological needs of the people in your audience.

4) New ideas, attitudes, or behavior advocated in your campaign must not run counter to the social norms generally accepted by people in your audience.

The first condition is obvious. If your messages never reach the person you want to influence, there's no way they can have an effect. This is why you must give careful thought to the channels you select to convey your message. You must choose channels the person you want to reach exposes himself to. In fact, it's not a bad idea to use several channels at the same time and to repeat your message several times within each channel. Both of these tactics increase the chan es of reaching your receiver. If you go too far with this

approach, however, your costs become excessive. Cost per thousand (CPM), or the amount of money it costs to reach 1,000 people is frequently used for comparison purposes in public communication. If you buy a full page in a daily newspaper, for example, you might pay $9.00 to reach 1,000 readers. If only ten of those readers are in your audience, however, you are really paying $900.00 to reach 1,000 people in your audience. A special magazine, on the other hand, might cost $11.00 per thousand readers. If 100 of those readers are in your audience, however, your real cost is $110.00 per thousand. You can see why you must choose media channels with minimum wasted coverage if you want to keep your costs to a minimum. This suggests how important media selection is in your public communication strategy.

Similarly, if the message doesn't catch the attention of the receiver, it may as well not have been sent in the first place. Catching attention through media is not as simple as you might think. Psychologists have shown that the brain works as hard to keep messages out of awareness as it does to take them in.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT (continued)

7. Where possible, reinforce the messages you send out through mass media by using interpersonal channels -- try to stimulate word-of-mouth discussion among people in your audience.
8. Place your messages strategically. Try to influence people who will in turn influence other people. You can expand your communication resources by convincing other people to invest time and money toward the solution of your communication problem.
9. Involve your audience actively. Try to get people to make active public commitments to you or to the positions you want them to take.
10. Messages and communicators are known by the company they keep. Try to assure that each message reaches its audience in a favorable context.
11. Use high-prestige personalities to communicate your message, but remember that different audiences respect different people.
12. Determine who the important political, social, business people are in your audience and try to get them behind your communication efforts.
13. Integrate well-established and appropriate psychological appeals into your message such as security and social acceptance. Integrate your messages into the context of the self-interests of the audience you want to reach.
14. Use the band-wagon effect. Show your audience how

You can verify this for yourself by going through a newspaper or magazine you've read recently a second time. If you'll scan each column carefully you'll be astounded at how many items you missed completely. There seem to be many reasons why our brains work so hard to keep information out of our awareness. Perhaps the major reason is that there are far more signals coming into the eyes, ears and other senses at any one time than we can consciously deal with.

Imagine, for example, that you are driving home from a week at the beach through rush hour traffic. Your poison ivy is killing you. Your kids are fighting in the back seat. Your spouse is complaining that you're always daydreaming and never pay attention to him. The newscaster is reeling off the latest sports scores. The car behind you is tailgating. The car beside you is a police car. And the traffic light up ahead turns yellow.

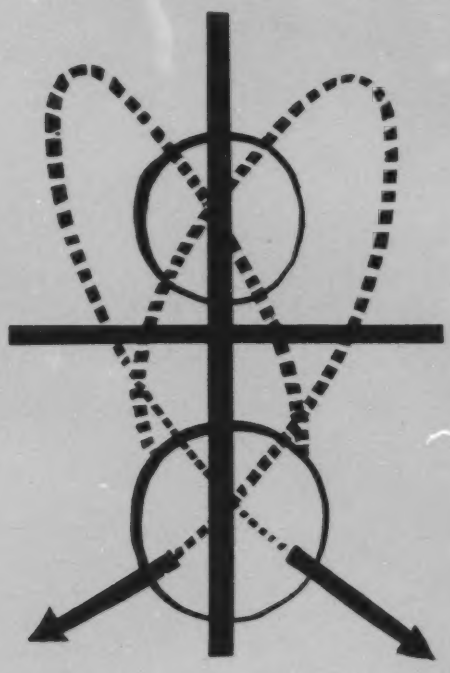
Your brain must sort out all of these signals. You can't pay attention to all of them at once. The sorter may work something like this: "Urgent! Send up to awareness instantly! Hold this one until the crisis is over. Are you kidding? He can't be bothered with such trivia at a time like this...Ignore! Ignore!"

Which signals are considered urgent and which get ignored depend on many things. We respond to some signals automatically. These are the frequently experienced signals that trigger various habits or automatic responses within us. You may not even be aware of seeing the yellow light, but you come to a smooth stop anyway. Some signals are ignored as unimportant. Maybe you hate sports so you don't even hear what the newscaster is saying or, maybe your kids fight all the time, so as long as they aren't drawing blood you don't give it a second thought. Some signals get put into memory for later attention. You've got a tricky traffic situation on your hands so you momentarily put your spouse's complaint out of your mind and, for the moment at least, your poison ivy stops itching. Some signals get immediate, close, and continuous attention. The car behind you poses a threat to you and your family so you watch it closely in your rear-view mirror.

No two people will sort out these signals in exactly the same way, however. Generally speaking, people pay attention to changing signals in the environment that are slightly out of the ordinary such as a sudden movement, an unexpected sound (silence), an odd shape, contrasting color, or distinctive pattern. Beyond this, however, people will perceive and respond to signals that relate to their psychological needs, that are consistent with the context they are involved with at the moment, and which fit their logic, language, or category systems.

In communication, the less clear or the more ambiguous the message, the more likely the receiver will either fail to see it or will distort the intended meaning if he indeed does see it.

Here are some examples of the principles I've been talking about:



When you first turned to this page, chances are your eye was attracted to Figure 1. This is because it is a diagram in a book that is mostly words. Think back to what you thought when you first saw the diagram. Did you try to figure out the meaning? If you thought you grasped the meaning you were fooling yourself because as far as I'm concerned the diagram has no meaning in the context of this book. Caught your eye, though, didn't it! From this you can see why advertisers use bright colors, catchy slogans, pretty girls, flashing signs, loud music or other razzmatazz to hook your attention.

Here's an example of how your motivations influence

your perceptions. There are many odors in a city -- automotive exhaust, rotting garbage, industrial odors, bakery odors, and dog litter, for example. If you are really hungry, chances are you can smell a bakery or a Colonel Sanders Kentucky Fried Chicken stand a block away. If you've just finished a big meal, you're much less likely to notice food odors, but rotting garbage may make you feel a bit nauseated. Try to imagine the odor of baking bread. If you're hungry it should be fairly easy. If you've just finished eating, it may be more difficult. Relating your messages to people's needs is extremely important.

The context in which a signal occurs is also very important. If the meaning of a signal or message is ambiguous or is not immediately clear, we tend to look at the general situation or background as well as the signals that come before and after for clues to help us figure out what the message means. If a message is presented at an inappropriate time, it may be thrust into an unrelated context and therefore be misunderstood. In this case the background or context confuses more than it clarifies. There is a pattern in the following sequence of figures, for example. See if you can continue the series by drawing the next figure:

If you have trouble, there's a clue at the end of the chapter. Don't peek.

This example suggests that you must deliver your message at the appropriate time and in a meaningful context if people are to perceive it and take it seriously. If Henry Kissenger wants to send a serious diplomatic note to the Kremlin, for example, it's doubtful that he'd print it as an ad in Playboy -- even though he may know that Breshnev reads every issue.

As an example of how the experiential or conceptual categories a person customarily uses influences perception. Imagine an antique dealer, an engineer, a teenager and a grandmother walking by an old cabinet radio at a fleamarket. The antique dealer sees a good buy that can be resold at a profit; the engineer sees an example of outmoded electronic technology that was pretty hot stuff in its day; the teenager doesn't see it at all because it's just junk as far as she's concerned; the grandmother feels a wave of nostalgia for the old radio programs and the pleasant Sunday evenings with the family sitting around the set.

Substitute any message you send out for the old cabinet radio and you can see how different people read quite different meanings into your messages, responding as though you had said totally different things.

This brings us to the second condition Schramm says you have to meet: your messages must be understood by the people in your audience.

Clearly if I wrote this book in Swahili or Urdu many readers in the United States wouldn't understand a word of it. You have to "talk the language" of the people in your audience if you expect to be understood. But if you think about it for a moment, even people who speak English often have trouble understanding one another. Specialists talk differently than laymen. Poor people talk differently than rich people. Well-educated people talk differently than less well-educated people. Children talk differently than adults. Recent immigrants talk differently than descendants of people who came over on the Mayflower. When people in these different categories talk to people in other categories the chances for misunderstanding are high.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT (continued)

"everyone" is getting behind your point of view.

15. Be sure that each message you send out is appropriate to the channel through which it is sent. Try to make effective use of the advantageous characteristics of each communication medium you use. Be sensitive to the needs of the media gatekeepers so they will reinforce rather than impede your communication efforts.

16. Think boldly in developing attention-getting devices for your messages, but be sure that whatever devices you use reinforce rather than detract from the intent of your message. Consider how you can create a positive climate for your message, perhaps through the use of humor or entertainment, where appropriate.

17. Try to get the most for the least in your various uses of media. Look for solutions that help you achieve several objectives with one stroke.

18. Try to work out evaluative procedures for each step or element in your media strategy. Think creatively about this; for example, consider how a biologist uses radio-active tracers to study the metabolism of a plant. Coupons in magazine advertisments serve a similar function.

# # #

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Here are a number of garden-variety villians in the melodrama of misunderstanding:

OVERLY TECHNICAL LANGUAGE

> The reverse-current method suffers the additional handicap of charge-storage in the junction when the forward current is reversed.

Technical language is invented to allow greater precision in communication. But all technical terms must be defined and the audience must understand the underlying concepts and assumptions of the discussion for true communication to occur. Otherwise technical talk might just as well be a foreign language or secret code. Bankers, lawyers, engineers, scientists, theologians, educators all use technical language at times. If specialists are involved in any aspect of your public communication campaign, watch 'em like a hawk. Otherwise they'll end up throwing technical words around like rice at a wedding.

Jargon, slang, alphabet abbreviations for organizations, government agencies, or programs that aren't spelled out for the non-initiated reader --

Jargon is bastardized technical language that is often used to snow the reader or listener, rather than to communicate information. Here are a few jargon words that have been borrowed from psychology: ego, empathy, psychotic, schizoid, hyperactive. If you'd like a few from education: individuated instruction, open-classroom, affective learning, resource room. Jargon is often a verbal smokescreen that hides the writer or speaker's ignorance. Even professional communicators use jargon, believe it or not. Sam Riley from Temple University draws attention to this little gem:

> Normative multi-dimensional perceptual states relate directly to non-political cognitive modernity.

Slang, on the other hand, often starts out as an attempt to make talk colorful and vivid. Surfers hang ten. Car freaks get gigs to score bread to chop and channel their shorts. Kids talk about hot tickets and wicked bummers. There are two problems, of course. If you don't know the slanguage you're left high and dry out in the cold. Or, if the slang is so successful that everyone knows what it means, it's about as colorful as an anemic zombie.

Government bureaucrats have to be world-champion alphabet-soup freaks. We're all familiar with IRS, FBI, USIS, DOD, DOT, CIA, TVA. But spend an hour in a

Washington coffee shop and you'll have mysterious abbreviations and acronyms coming out your ears. In Boston, people following the school desegregation issue had to contend with CCC, CDAC, ROAR, CAR, NAACP and about forty bezillion others. If you must play with alphabet blocks, tell the rest of us what your abbreviations stand for at least once in everything you write.

Overly-abstract language that goes on forever in windy phrases about things you can't see, hear, smell, touch or taste --

I found this beauty in a government pamphlet on patents:

> In order to be entitled to reexamination or reconsideration, the applicant must make request therefore in writing, and he must distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the examiner's action; the applicant must respond to every ground of objection and rejection in the prior Office action -- except that request may be made that objections or requirements as to form not necessary to further consideration of the claims be held in abeyance until allowable subject matter is indicated -- and the applicant's action must appear throughout to be a bona fide attempt to advance the case to final action.

Enough said.

Illogical, disorganized and/or ungrammatical language --

You don't necessarily have to write and talk by the book, but you should do everything you can to make sense. A graduate student of mine stated a campaign objective as follows:

> "Increase the number of reported rapes in Boston by January 1, 1977."

Diagrams, photographs, motion pictures or other visual messages that are poorly composed, focused, reproduced, or captioned --

Go to a technical conference sometime if you want to see this villian working overtime. The space scientist stands behind the lectern before 625 people and asks for the first slide. The slide, poorly focused and exposed, shows 58 lines of computer printout and a graph with 22 wavy gray lines. But you can't see it because the house lights are still on. "As everyone can see," the scientist says, "my data proves..."

Audio tracks that are poorly produced --

These often result when the home-movie buff tries to produce a program for his favorite community organization using two borrowed cassette tape recorders and a narrator who blew his audition for the church Christmas pageant.

Insincere or pretentious speaking or writing --

If you've had anyone try to sell you land in Florida lately you're well acquainted with this one. Funeral parlor commercials are also pretty good at this. When you speak or write, be yourself. If you have something worthwhile to say, chances are good that people will listen regardless of the sophistication of your presentation.

Excessive background noise, visual clutter, or indeed, any potential distraction from the main point --

Anything you say or write in public communication should have a purpose. If you are preparing a newsletter or poster, every mark on the paper should have a meaning that relates to the whole. If you set up a meeting, find a quiet place and eliminate all distractions. A frame of white space sets off a beautiful painting from a cluttered world. Try to frame every message in your public communication campaign in the same way.

Even if you succeed in getting your meaning across, you may find that people don't really care about what you have to say. This happens when your message doesn't relate to their needs or interests. If your message relates to pressing material or psychological needs of people within your audience, they will work hard to seek it out and decipher its meaning, even if they have to overcome distracting noise, poor writing, or visual disorganization to do so. This still doesn't mean they will decipher the meaning correctly, but it does mean they have the motivation to try. If your message doesn't relate to perceived needs, people in your audience will usually ignore it, regardless of how skillfully it's presented.

If you're talking to a lot of people you've never met, it's sometimes hard to know what their needs are. Some advertisers have this problem because they are selling products that no one on earth <u>really</u> needs. But they get sneaky. They appeal to real, universal psychological needs like sex, status, security, or belonging. They use words and pictures to make our basic needs rise up out of the psychological depths, then they try to show how buying their hairspray, dog

biscuits, laundry brighteners, exotic sportscars or congressional candidates will satisfy these needs and make the vague yearning go away. This is a twice sneaky tactic because the needs they are appealing to can only be satisfied temporarily, increasing the chances that we'll be repeat customers. You can spot this tactic when the message suggests you're not sexy enough, young enough, well-enough liked, part of the "in" crowd, or that you might die at any moment leaving your poor loved ones destitute.

Politicians have their own bag of tricks, like talking about evil forces boring from within and without, making us feel that the state is going to topple at any moment. If you think about it, however, this is usually the same basic tactic of persuasion that you see in fire insurance ads, some public health campaigns, and claims for products that are supposed to eliminate body odor.

When you design your messages so they relate to perceived needs of people within your audience you are

PRODUCING A SLIDE FEATURE FOR TELEVISION

A slide feature is a one or two-minute factual feature aimed and providing either news, information, entertainment, or education. Your organization can produce a slide feature inexpensively for use by television stations during their newscasts.

Though it is unlikely that major market stations will accept these, many smaller stations, lacking the staff and budget to produce a lot of feature material, will welcome a well-executed, informative piece.

Think imaginatively in choosing your theme. Beyond straight news there are many special interest areas -- from consumer affairs to sports to the arts -- for you to zero in on.

Here are some tips on putting together your slide feature:

About the slides:

1. You'll need four to six high-quality 35-mm slides that maintain visual interest and tell a clear story. They should be numbered in sequence.
2. They should be horizontal (like your TV set) and in color.
3. Never substitute transparencies or prints for slides.
4. Don't use typewritten titles on slides. Stations won't accept them.
5. Items of visual interest in your slides should be toward the center, never at the edges since the slides will be cropped slightly when broadcast.

(continued)

"canalizing" your message according to communication theorists. When you show how a particular legislative bill will reduce taxes to improve education as a tactic for stimulating support for the bill, you are "canalizing" your appeal to vote for the bill. People always want to reduce taxes or improve education. Your appeal shows that they can help do this by supporting the bill. When you think about it, it's only common sense to canalize your message. The only moral objection I have to this tactic in advertising or politics is when false promises are implied.

The last condition for successful communication is also a matter of common sense. People very seldom change their ideas, attitudes or ways of behaving without consulting many other people around them. People spend their waking hours in families, neighborhoods, work groups, social and recreational clubs, civic groups, and religious organizations. Each of these groups spell out either formal or informal conditions for membership. Further, these groups tend to establish, often informally, many norms of thought and action for individual members. And each group has its own sanctions and rewards to keep individual members in line. It's very rewarding to receive the support of a group. Similarly, it's very painful to be ridiculed or ostracized. This is why people don't usually change their ideas, attitudes or behavior without checking it out with the people they associate with in valued groups.

If your message runs counter to accepted group norms, your listener is put under cross pressure. Since the group usually has more frequent, more immediate, and more substantial influence with your listener, your message usually comes out the loser. On the other hand, if your message reinforces accepted group values it will be much more likely to be accepted. This is why communicators often try to show that "everyone's doing it." The old cliche of the campaign bandwagon is quite appropriate. If people have the idea that climbing on your campaign bandwagon is "the thing to do," the success of your campaign is assured.

Now that we've explored these basic principles, it's easy to show you how to develop your campaign strategy.

After you've thoroughly investigated your problem, set objectives, and analyzed your audience, you're ready to develop a theme for your campaign. A theme is a single, highly compressed idea, slogan, or visual image that sums up the major thrust of your campaign. A good theme is eye and ear catching, easily remembered, relates to the needs and interests of the audience, and offers minimal opportunity for parody. Some of the great themes of advertising might inspire you -- I'd walk a mile for a Camel..." "See the USA in a

Chevrolet..." "You deserve a break today..." Smokey the Bear provided a memorable thematic image for the U.S. Department of the Interior's forest fire prevention campaigns. Or what about the Jolly Green Giant?

A good theme gets under the skin of the listener. It acts as a focal point for many of the more subtle ideas or facts of the campaign. Every time the theme comes to mind, or is reinforced through media, many other associated ideas of the campaign are stimulated in the listener's mind. In this way, the theme tends to integrate many different messages carried by many different media throughout the campaign. The theme, in effect, helps knit together a consistent, effective image for the whole campaign.

The next step in your campaign strategy is to consider the various media channels available to you. You might start out with broad categories such as face-to-face, print, broadcast. As you get deeper into your planning, however, you'll want to become very specific--the weekly education column in the local paper; the

PRODUCING A SLIDE FEATURE FOR TELEVISION (continued)

About the script:

1. Use simple language.
2. Type your script on a separate piece of paper, not on the cover letter.
3. Send two copies.
4. 120 words is approximately one minute of copy. Plan to allow about 20 words per slide if you're using six slides. 40 words if you're using four.

Laurie Beckelman

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public affairs talk show on station WXYZ; the PTA newsletter. Your select a specific media channel for many reasons. It covers the same geographic area as your audience; it is read, watched or listened to by people in the same age, income and education bracket as people you want to reach; it's appropriate for the kind of message you want to put out; you can afford it.

Here's a very useful tool to help you decide which media channels to use to reach the various segments of your audience. I call it a media selection matrix.

AUDIENCE SEGMENTS

CHANNELS	bicycle riders	parents of bicycle riders	teachers	motorists
school assemblies				
bulletin boards				
safety day				
local newspaper				
local radio				

Media selection matrix

First you list all the audience segments you want to reach across the top of a large sheet of paper. Then you list all the media channels that might be remotely useful to you in your campaign down the left hand margin. You mark off rows and columns. You now examine each box starting at the top left corner of the matrix. Each box represents a particular audience segment and a particular media channel. Ask yourself if this media channel is appropriate to reach this particular audience segment. If so, put a check mark in the box. If you don't feel that it's appropriate, you leave the box blank. Now, as you examine the pattern of checkmarks, you can see the various channel options you have available to reach each audience segment.

The next step is to define terminal communication objectives for each audience segment. You will have successfully completed your public communication campaign when you've reached all of them. Looking at each specific audience segment, ask how the various media

channels you've checked can be used most effectively to reach your audience. You may decide that some channels are more important than others. In this case you may decide to eliminate the less powerful media possibilities. On the other hand, looking across each row, you may find that certain channels reach several audience segments simultaneously. This may argue for leaving it in, although there are more powerful media choices for reaching a given audience segment. You want to try to maximize the chances of reaching the communication objectives assigned to every audience segment while minimizing the expense and production and distribution efforts of your campaign. When you've come up with a pattern of check marks in the media selection matrix that you like, number each box that contains a mark.

It's possible that you'll need more information about each channel possibility before you decide whether or not to use it. The reference room in your library provides one good source of information, and the sales department of the particular media outlet

EFFECTIVE VISUALS . . .

- tell the story quickly, boldly, and directly.
- are brief, clear, and to the point.
- contain only essential information needed to get the message across.
- are not cluttered with lots of words and too much design.
- use striking colors for strong impact.

Mary Maurides

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you're considering provides a second. There are three valuable media selection references: Standard Rate and Data Service; Broadcasting Yearbook; and Ayer's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals.

Standard Rate and Data Service publishes several directories that list consumer magazines, business magazines, and radio and television stations. The directories are designed to help people who buy advertising time and space determine what media outlets are available in various parts of the country and for various special interest groups. Published advertising rates are listed, although these should only be taken as guides to the maximum you'd expect to pay, since all of these rates tend to be negotiable. Brief information is also given about editorial and sales personnel, circulation, and editorial policy.

Broadcasting Yearbook lists all of the radio and television stations across the country. Each listing contains basic information such as key personnel, format, transmitter power, antenna height.

Ayer's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals lists daily and weekly newspapers and periodicals published in the U.S., Canada, Bermuda, Panama and and the Philippines. For each it gives frequency, political leanings, founding date, subscription rate and circulation.

There are many more specialized media directories and reference sources, but they tend to be less available to non-professional users. Professional rating services such as Neilson, ARB, and Starch, for example, issue periodic reports of who is reading, listening to, or watching what when in the public media, but their services are quite expensive and generally only available to advertising agencies and media organizations with enough money to pay stiff subscription fees.

When you've completed your media selection matrix, you're ready to plan in more detail how to reach each segment of your audience. Each of the boxes you've checked represents a specific communication link with a particular segment of your audience. Each of these links can be considered a specific program in your overall campaign. You want to weave these programs into a responsive network that reaches your total audience. You might think of each of these separate communication channels as a key on a piano. Your job as a communicator is to play the right keys at the right time to make music with your audience. If your thinking is not clear, or your fingers are not coordinated, you'll only succeed in making noise. To make music, you have to know what to say over each channel, how and when to say it, how to enter the message into the channel, and how to determine whether or not it

reached its destination and produced the desired effect. It's useful to fill out a communication worksheet for each square you've checked in the media selection matrix:

Communication Worksheet

Program: 5

Channel: PTA newsletter

Audience: Parents of children who ride bikes to Underwood School

Communication objective: Stimulate 80 per cent of parents to check out safety features on their childrens' bicycles and discuss safe riding habits with their children within the next month.

Provide a checklist to help them do this.

Results will be measured by a random-sample telephone survey conducted on October 20.

Theme of campaign: Mike Superbike says, "Take pride in a safe ride."

Summary of message: The message will point out that the number of bicycle accidents in the Underwood area have increased over the last two years and that effective steps must be taken to reduce the number of accidents.

Bicycle safety checklist.

Format: Cover news story will tell about the rising trend in bicycle accidents and announce the Underwood bike safety campaign.

Bicycle safety checklist will be provided on inside front cover.

Principal Sullivan will write the guest editorial on the subject of bike safety.

Calendar listing will contain dates for bike safety events.

Attention-getting devices: Print headline in red. Vivid

graphic of an accident involving a bicycle.

Audience needs: Love for and responsibility toward children.

Significant groups: Family, PTA

Evaluation: Random-sample telephone survey on October 20.

Number of bicycles registered on Bike Day.

Comparative accident statistics over next year.

Date of release: October 1

Frequency of release: one time

Follow-up: November issue of newsletter will contain news story that reports results of survey and success of Bike Day.

Each item on the communication worksheet should be self-evident. The program number, channel, audience, and objectives are taken from the media selection matrix. The objective that you list, of course, is the intermediate objective that you've assigned to program number five. In order to reach the terminal objective of your overall public communication campaign, you have to reach all of the separate program objectives listed on your media-selection matrix.

A format is a specific way of organizing information so that it is suitable for a particular medium and audience. There are many different formats in a newspaper, for example. There are straight news stories that just give you the facts. There are news features which give you interpretation and background information. There are editorials, paid advertisements, letters to the editor, and so on. On television there are news shows, dramas, quiz shows, talk shows, commercials, and public service announcements. Each of these formats lends itself to particular kinds of information and particular purposes.

Audiences tend to trust some formats more than others, for example. A news story is more believable in general than an advertisement. The newspaper, on the other hand, will sell you advertising space, but you must convince the editors that your story is news before they will run it as a news story. Knowing which format to select for what purpose is an important skill in public communication campaign planning. You can think of formats as differently shaped packages for information. As you read the newspaper, listen to the

radio, or watch television, try to identify the different formats that are used.

Once you are acquainted with the different formats, you can decide what formats to use for your purposes by asking the following questions:

--What different formats are used in the medium I want to use?

--How do the editors decide which formats to use for the different kinds of information they present in this medium?

--Which formats are most credible to the audience?

--Which formats are available to me if I want to get access to the medium?

--Given the length, point of view or slant, objective or subjective nature, pictorial features of my information, which format seems to be most suitable for my purposes?

VISUAL DESIGN TIPS FOR GOOD COMMUNICATION . . .

Good symbols for movement are:

Lines and arrows
Background shapes
Grouping elements together for effect
Active illustrations

Emphasis: If each element (part) of the visual has equal intensity, the final effect is flat. Some parts must be less strong than others so that the eye is directed to the most important parts. This is done through:

Contrasting background shapes
Open spaces or white spaces
Strong contrasting colors
Constrasting sizes or styles
Contrasting letters with different colors
A large illustration

Unity: The parts of a visual should "hold together" so that one part does not dominate to the extent that it becomes greater than the whole. This can be done through:

Overlapping parts
The use of lines

Special Appeal: A visual is designed for a special purpose and should have just one theme about that purpose. The visual should show a feeling for the event, service, or attitude.

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--How can I tailor my information to fit a suitable format that will increase my chances of access to the medium without losing the point of the message?

If you can skillfully adapt your information to the formats customarily used in the different media, you'll greatly increase the effectiveness of your communication efforts and the chances that your messages will get picked up as news, feature, or program material by editors and run as editorial material. The alternative is to buy advertising time or space. The difference between whether you pay for advertising time or space or get free publicity, in other words, often amounts to the format you use.

In advertising you pay for both production and distribution of your message and you appeal directly to your ultimate audience.

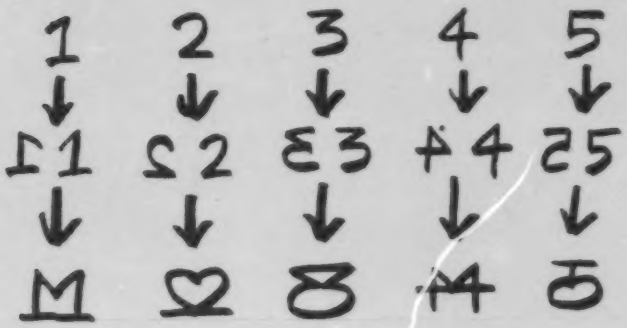
In publicity you try to design your message so that it meets the editorial needs of specific editors. You pay only for the work required to get the editors interested in your message and to prepare the information they need in the form they need it to run your message editorially.

Editors are constantly looking for new ideas and information, of course, so it's relatively easy to attract their interest as long as you can speak their language and are sensitive to their editorial needs. The best way to learn their language is to get to know them professionally and personally. You can get to know them professionally by reading their newspapers or magazines or listening to or watching their broadcast programs. You can get to know them personally by visiting with them in their offices and discussing your concerns and how they fit the editor's needs. When you have a specific story, then, you know which editors to contact and how to prepare the material to fit their needs. Generally, you'll send them a press release or invite them to a press conference. Press releases are usually used for routine stories that involve important personalities or dramatic events.

You can also get free publicity by submitting releases for community calendar listings, contacting producers of radio or television talk shows to arrange personal appearances for people in your organization, suggesting good ideas for feature stories to newspaper or magazine editors, suggesting ideas and doing research for public affairs programming by radio and television stations, staging newsworthy events and getting your organization involved in important public programs that are going to be covered by the media, to name just a few possibilities.

One of the most important channels for publicity is word of mouth. If you can get people talking about your organization or programs in a positive way, your public communication efforts can be considered a great success. The basic principle for doing this is to involve people in every way possible in your activities. If you can work through other organized groups so much the better. A message received through the mass media is much more likely to be seen, noted and acted upon if it reinforces word-of-mouth messages coming from friends and associates. For this reason, use your imagination to reinforce the messages you put out through the mass media with face-to-face communication. If you can get listeners to commit themselves verbally to your ideas or programs, your success is assured.

Oh, I almost forgot:



Chapter 7

The time of your life -- don't
throw it around like that.

There are four precious resources that you never have enough of -- time, money, information, and creative ideas.

To some extent you can substitute any of these resources for any other. If you have detailed information about your audience, for example, you save both time and money because you know just exactly what to say and what media to use to say it most effectively. If you have less detailed information you are less likely to say the right thing in your messages and more likely to choose inappropriate channels -- which means that you must spend more time and money to assure adequate media coverage.

Similarly, a highly creative message may get the same degree of attention with one exposure as a humdrum message repeated 20 times -- a clear saving of time and money.

There is a distinct difference between time and money as resources on the one hand and information and creative ideas on the other, however.

The difference is that you can only spend a minute or a dollar once, whereas a scrap of information or a bright idea can be used over and over again.

This suggests that you need to watch your minutes and dollars very carefully during the course of your campaign. Since you never have enough of either, you must milk every drop of value you can out of what you have. This takes planning.

Professional communicators use two extremely power-

ful tools when it comes to planning how to use their time and money. They keep track of time with flow charts. They keep track of money with budgets. This chapter will deal with flowcharts and the next with budgets.

A flowchart is a nifty way to keep track of all the little jobs that need to be done to carry out an effective public communication campaign. A flowchart helps you figure out the most efficient way to get all the jobs done. It tells you the shortest amount of time needed to complete a complicated sequence of tasks and helps you figure out the damage when a particular job doesn't get started on time or takes longer than planned. With a flowchart in your hip pocket, you don't have to run around with that unsettled feeling in the pit of your stomach that there a thousand things that need to be done, but you just can't figure out where to start. To my way of thinking, a flowchart is literally a life-saver. After all, you only have so many minutes in your life, so you can't afford to throw them around like nonreturnable bottles.

A FEW PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

BALANCE is the basic quality of all design. This is done through careful arrangement of the elements of the visual--lettering, symbols, pictures.

Formal Balance: The design is divided right down the middle and one side is exactly the same or is a mirror image of the other in shape. This type of balance communicates formality, serenity, and restfulness. Try to use a large amount of white space for this kind of balance, as well as simple drawings and sharp colors with good contrast.

Informal Balance: This is a design, cut down the middle, which is not the same on both sides. A large element on one side can be balanced with a smaller one on the other--but placed further from the central line. This type of design appears active and dynamic in contrast to formal balance design. Look at ads in magazines to see how this is done.

Movement: Movement directs the viewer's eye from one part of the poster or graphic to another. In this way, various points may be stressed in order of importance.

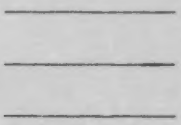
COLOR

attracts attention
identifies
gives emphasis
lends feeling for the ideas being presented
can create unity and movement

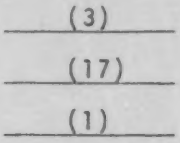
Ellen Zitner

For the idea of a flowchart to make sense, you have to understand clearly the difference between a job or task and an objective.

A task is a unit of work that takes time to accomplish. Washing the dishes, pouring the foundation for a house, or writing a press release are all tasks. In the language of a flowchart, a task is represented as a short straight line.

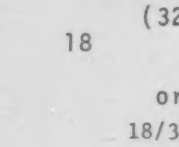


If you want to indicate how long a task is expected to take, you put a number in parentheses over the line which represents the number of hours or days the task is expected to take. Don't mix hours with days in your flowchart, however. Be consistent with whatever unit of time you choose.



Objectives, on the other hand, are points of progress. You've either arrived or you haven't. You might consider the time when the last dish is washed, the foundation is hardened, or the press release is written as objectives. In a flowchart an objective is represented as a small box with a number inside. It doesn't matter what number you use, as long as each objective in your campaign has a unique number assigned to it.

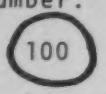
For every task there is a unique point of progress that lets you start the task and a unique point of progress that marks the completion of the task. These are the start objectives and end objectives of the task respectively. This suggests that any task can be described by three numbers -- start objective, end objective and estimated duration.



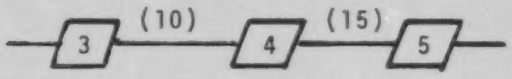
or

18/31/32

There can be only one starting point for the campaign as a whole, of course. This can be represented as a circle with a number inside. I always like to use 100 as a nice round number.

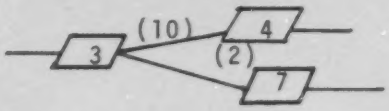


One thing you may have noticed about various tasks is that sometimes you have to do one task before you're really able to do another. Before you can replace a flat tire, for example, you have to jack up the car. One small part of a more comprehensive flowchart for changing a tire might look like this:



Objective three might be "jack removed from truck." The first task, which takes 10 minutes, is to jack up the car. Objective four is "car jackedup." The second task, which takes 15 minutes, is to take off the flat and install the spare; objective five is "tire changed." In this case the two tasks are strung together end-to-end like a chain.

Sometimes two different tasks can be done independently and at the same time. While one person is jacking up the car, for example, another person might set out safety flares on the highway:



Objective three is again "jack removed from truck;" objective seven is "safety flares ignited and in place." It's estimated that the task of setting out the flares will take two minutes. While that's going on, someone else is jacking up the car.

Let's develop a complete flowchart for the production of a slide-tape presentation. The slide-tape show will use 35-mm slides synchronized with an audio tape to tell the history of our organization. It will be used to tell the history of our organization. It will be used to recruit new members. We want to have the show ready for a premier showing at our April meeting 30 days from now, so our first question is whether or not we can get it completed on time. Secondly, we want to know what jobs need highest priority of effort and what jobs must be started right away.

The first step is to list all of the jobs that have to be done to produce the show and to define the objective of each job. We'll list the jobs randomly as they occur to us and arrange them in sequence later. We'll assign an arbitrary number to each objective,

being careful not to assign the same number to two different objectives:

task	estimated duration	end objective	objective number
		START	100
Research -- talk to old-time members and go through organization records	10 days	Sufficient research information compiled to write script	1
Write script and submit draft to board for approval	5 days	Script approved	2
Prepare budget and submit to board for approval	1 day	Budget approved	3
Locate and hire photographer	5 days	Contract signed by photographer	4
Locate props, costumes and locations	5 days	Props, costumes and locations ready for photography	5
Locate and hire artist	5 days	Contract signed by artist	6
Titles and artwork prepared	5 days	Titles and artwork ready for photography	7
Photography	3 days	Photography completed	8
Film processed by lab	2 days	Acceptable slides returned from lab	9
Locate sound studio	2 days	Recording time booked in suitable studio	10
Locate narrator	1 day	Contract signed by narrator	11
Locate music	2 days	Music chosen	12
Locate sound effects	1 day	Sound effects chosen	13
Record narration	1 day	Narration on tape	14

task	estimated duration	end objective	objective number
Mix music, narration and sound effects	1 day	Mixed audio track completed	15
Edit slides	1 day	Slides in proper sequence	16
Synchronize slides to audio track	1 day	Slide-tape show synchronized	17

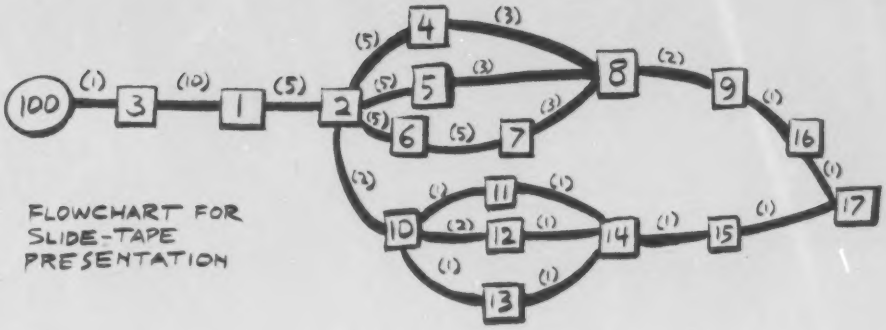
Now that we've listed all the jobs that need to be done, we go through the list and determine what objectives need to be reached before each job can be started:

task	end objective	must be preceeded by:
research	1	100, 3
script writing	2	100, 3, 1
prepare budget	3	100
locate photographer	4	100, 3, 1, 2
locate props, etc.	5	100, 3, 1, 2
locate artist	6	100, 3, 1, 2
prepare artwork	7	100, 3, 1, 2, 6
photography	8	100, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
film processing	9	100, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
locate sound studio	10	100, 3, 1, 2
locate narrator	11	100, 1, 2, 10
locate music	12	100, 1, 2, 10
locate sound effects	13	100, 1, 2, 10
record narration	14	100, 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13
mix	15	100, 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
edit slides	16	100, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
synchronize	17	100, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16

At this point the flowchart can be put together quite easily. We simply go down the list to find the tasks that can start immediately at the start point,

100. In this case it's preparation of the budget, the end point for which is objective three. No other tasks need be completed in order to start work on the budget. Now, from the list we can see that once the budget has been approved, research can be started. The end point of research is objective one.

When the research is completed, scriptwriting can begin. This leads to objective two. When objective two is reached, several tasks can be started independently of one another: we can start looking for the photographer, props, artist and recording studio.



FLOWCHART FOR SLIDE-TAPE PRESENTATION

These tasks branch out from objective two on our flowchart. We continue working down the list in this way until the flowchart is completed. If drawn correctly, the flowchart shows the logical sequence in which tasks must be carried out to produce the slide-tape show most efficiently. The project starts at 100 according to the flowchart and ends at 17. Objective 17 is the terminal objective of the project.

If we look at the flowchart carefully, we can see six different paths leading from 100 to 17:

path 1 -- 100, 3, 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 16, 17
path 2 -- 100, 3, 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 16, 17
path 3 -- 100, 3, 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16, 17
path 4 -- 100, 3, 1, 2, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17
path 5 -- 100, 3, 1, 2, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17
path 6 -- 100, 3, 1, 2, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17

To determine the shortest possible time in which the slidetape show can be completed, we have to trace each one of these paths and add up the estimated duration of each task along the path. Path four, for example, requires 22 days. The path that takes the longest is the shortest possible time in which the slide-tape show can be completed. In this case it's path three, which requires 33 days. This suggests that we cannot possibly complete the show in 30 days unless we can speed up one or more of the tasks along path three. If, for example, we could complete the research in six days, the slide-tape show could be completed in 29 days rather than 33. If, on the other hand, some task along path three takes longer than expected, then the earliest possible completion time for the slide-tape show is extended accordingly. If the artwork takes seven days instead of five, the earliest possible completion of the slide-tape show will be delayed by two days.

Path three is called the critical path. It's

THE PROCESS OF VISUAL DESIGN

Organize information as:

A slogan
An illustration or photograph
A trademark
As the name of the event, service, or product
The time, place, and date

Prime the pump by looking at many examples of good design. Make rough sketches before doing final visuals. The sketches should be in proportion to the size planned for the final visual. Experiment with different arrangements of the parts and with different sizes of lettering. Try different color combinations. Draw the visual full size on tracing or graph paper. Then transfer the final product to your final copy.

Bill Wenzel

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marked on the flowchart with heavy lines. The critical path is defined as the longest path from start to terminal objective through the flowchart. The critical path tells you where your efforts have to go to finish a given project in the shortest possible length of time. If, as in the case of the slide-tape show, you determine you can't meet an important deadline given the length of time estimated for each task, you either have to eliminate tasks along the critical path, or bring in more resources to finish various tasks along the critical path faster than first estimated.

If you want to go further....If you're willing to do a little bit of arithmetic, you can determine many useful facts from your flowchart. In addition to how long a project is expected to take and what priorities to give to each task, you can determine the earliest possible starting date and the latest possible completion date for each task. From these facts you can draw up a realistic timetable for your project. As I tell you how to do this it would sound more complicated than it really is. If you can balance a checkbook, you'll have no trouble analyzing your flowchart.

Look again at the flowchart. The tasks of locating a photographer, props, artist and recording studio (tasks 2/4/5, 2/5/5, 2/6/5 and 2/10/2) can't possibly start until the budget has been approved, the research completed and the script approved (tasks 100/3/1, 3/1/10 and 1/2/5). These tasks will take a total of 16 days. Therefore tasks 2/4/5, 2/5/5, 2/6/5 and 2/10/2 can't possibly start until 16 days after the project has started. The sixteenth day of the project is the early start date for each of these four tasks. If the project starts on March 1, for example, these tasks can't possibly start until March 16.

The earliest possible start date for task 8/1/2 is 29 days after the project starts. To determine this we add up the estimated task durations along the longest path from 100 to objective eight.

The latest possible completion date for a task tells us when a task must be completed so as not to interfere with the earliest completion date of the whole project. Actually, we might want to keep two completion dates in mind for a given task -- the latest possible completion date, and the early start date of the next task. It's possible to start a task that's not on the critical path late without interfering with the earliest possible completion date for the project as a whole. When this happens we say we have float time over and above the estimated duration of the task. There are actually two kinds of float time: Free float is the amount of extra time available to us to complete a task without interfering with the early start time of the next task. Total float is the extra time we can

take on a task without interfering with the earliest completion date for the whole project. It might take a moment to see the difference, but it's really fairly simple.

The amount of free float may be found by substracting the early start date of the task you're looking at from the early start date of the next task and then substracting from the result the estimated duration of the task you're looking at.

Say you want to determine the free float of task 2/4/5. First determine the early start of task 4/8/3 by adding up the estimated duration of all tasks on the longest path leading up to 4/8/3. You should come up with 21. Now determine the early start date of 2/4/5. You should arrive at 16. Subtract 16 from 21. The answer, of course, is five. Finally, subtract the estimated duration of task 2/4/5, which is five, from five. From this you see that you have no free float for task 2/4/5. The job has to start on time and can-

THE NEWSLETTER

A regular newsletter is an effective way to communicate news about your organization to members and interested outsiders. It can keep people informed, maintain morale and encourage a sense of involvement.

A recent Harris Survey of public officials, for example, found that while only 38 percent of the public officeholders polled sent out newsletters, 59 percent of the public reported having received a newsletter. A minority of public officials, in other words, found the newsletter an effective medium for reaching constituents.

Your newsletter should have an attractive and distinctive masthead, which includes a title, the name of your organization, and a dateline.

Copy layout should be neat and consistent.

Newsletters can be mimeographed or offset printed.

Information in the newsletter should be simple.

The copy should be newsworthy and timely. Think of important events the organization wants to stress. Make each item short and use newswriting style that is clear, concise, and readable.

Ideas for stories might include facts about the organization, brief profiles of the people involved, the organization goals and problems. What programs are coming up? What events have just occurred? What issues will interest your readers?

Your readers' needs and interests combined with the communication goals or your organization should determine the content of your newsletter.

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not take longer than estimated if you are going to start the next task at the earliest possible time. Task 4/8/3, on the other hand, has five days of free float. See if you can calculate it for yourself.

free float =	early start date next task	-	early start date this task	-	estimated duration this task

Total float is an indication of how long after the early start date a task may begin or how much longer than estimated a task may take without interfering with the early completion date of the entire project.

total float =	late completion date of this task	-	early start this task	-	estimated duration this task

To find out the total float of task 2/4/5 we subtract the early start time, 16, from the late completion time, 26, which gives 10. Then we subtract the estimated duration of task 2/4/5, which is five, and we find that we have five days of total float. This means that we can start task 2/4/5 five days late or take five days longer than estimated and still not interfere with the early completion date of the project.

Since both require only addition and subtraction, the only difference between balancing a checkbook and analyzing a flowchart is that there is a great deal more arithmetic to do if you have a large flowchart. It gets tedious to do all of the addition and subtraction needed to figure out the length of the critical path, early start dates, late completion dates, and free float for every task, so professionals use computers. Even a very complicated flowchart can be analyzed in ten to 15 minutes. Computerized flowchart analysis is widely used in business, so ask around among your business or engineering friends and you should be able to find someone who will run your flowchart through their computer.

Once you've analyzed your flowchart you're ready to make up a timetable. If it's essential to finish your project by a particular date, start at the terminal objective, assign your deadline date to it, and work backward, assigning calendar dates to early start dates and late completion dates for each task, counting backwards on the calendar. When you arrive at the start date, you know when your project has to start to end on time.

The other way to do it is to start at the start point, assign an actual kickoff date for the project

and work forward, marking early start dates and late completion dates for each task as you go.

One idea that's useful to keep in mind is that you can develop a master flowchart for your entire campaign, representing large tasks such as producing a slide-tape presentation or organizing a conference as single lines on the chart. The master flowchart shows the relationship of all the various programs in the campaign to one another. Then, later, you can make more detailed flowcharts for each individual program in the campaign as we've done in the previous example. These flowcharts spell out the specific jobs that need to be done to carry out each program.

Going back to Chapter Six, we might take the various programs indicated in the media selection matrix, for example, and arrange them into a flowchart. The resulting flowchart may tell us that publicity has to be arranged through the school assembly, the bulletin boards, and the PTA newsletter long before safety day if we are going to have good attendance. Now, once the master flowchart is designed, we make up detailed flowcharts for each separate program indicated on the media selection matrix. These flowcharts, taken together, tell us when every single task in the campaign has to be done and gives us the information we need to start developing an accurate budget.

Chapter 8

Budgets for paupers and princes

The very word budget is enough to send stomach acid surging through the innards of the most mild of manner. Budgets fall in with diets, exercise, and reading Shakespeare -- people who can stick with them for more than two weeks deserve licorice lollypops, thumbstretching or worse.

In public communication, budgets are more important than typewriters and cameras. Money is usually the most difficult resource for a community organization to come up with. Yet it is the easiest resource to squander. If you cansider that a dollar bill is only as good as the wisdom with which it's spent, then a budget should be considered a font of wisdom since it reflects the total knowledge, skill and judgement of the communicator. A budget represents a very real commitment to a particular communication strategy. The budget more than anything else determines whether a public communication campaign results in maximum influence with the audience or little more than a heap of scrap paper and a bucket of hot air.

Campaign budgets are put together for two reasons. First, they determine how much money is needed to carry out a particular campaign strategy. Second, they are used to determine the most effective strategy that can be carried out for a given amount of money. A well-conceived budget gives potential contributors to your campaign confidence that you know what you're doing and motivates them to give you their fullest support. Further, it gives you confidence that you're getting the most value from every dollar spent and makes you feel better about asking other people for money.

There are four major sections to a campaign bud-

get -- administration, production, distribution and evaluation.

The administration part of the budget includes all of the overhead costs of the campaign such as rent, phone, utilities, salaries that are not directly attributable to production, distribution or evaluation of messages; and miscellaneous postage, travel expenses and subscriptions.

The production part of the budget includes all of the costs associated with the design and production of messages such as writing, artwork, photography, printing, sound studio rental, film, audio tape and equipment rental.

The distribution part of the budget includes all of the expenses associated with getting messages out to the audience such as broadcast time, advertising space in publications; postage for direct mail; motion picture prints or duplicate audio or video tapes; rent-

WORKING WITH PHOTOGRAPHERS

Words and pictures together offer an effective means of communicating. Photographs can be used in booklets, brochures, magazines, newspapers, posters, and flyers. Slide presentations, movies, and television also depend on pictures for effective communication.

When the services of a photographer are needed, keep the following points in mind:

1. Tell the photographer exactly what kind of picture you want. Be specific. Do you need a horizontal or vertical shot? People looking left or right? Head shots or group shots? What action shots do you need? Also, tell him the intended use of the photos.
2. Make all necessary arrangements ahead of time. Be sure the people to be photographed will be present when the photographer arrives. Pick a location convenient for both parties, whenever possible.
3. Consider the photographer's suggestions. He knows his art and he'll be more than happy to help.
4. Write down the names of all people in the picture and spell them correctly. If there is a large group, it is helpful to bring along a small cassette recorder. Ask each person his or her name and spell it out.
5. Order what you need. Ask to see contact sheets before ordering prints. Most publications require 8" x 10" glossies printed full frame. Cropping can be done later.
6. If the photographs are to be used for commercial purposes prepare releases for people being photographed to accompany the pictures.

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al of projectors, tape recorders, facilities for public meetings.

Evaluation includes all of the costs associated with determining how well messages and media channels work such as design and pretesting of survey instruments (questionnaires), data collection, and computer time for tabulating survey responses.

A good budget anticipates every possible cost in a campaign -- from security guards and portable toilets for an outdoor event, to parking tickets and coffee for a film production crew. Further, a good budget provides one and only one category for every possible expense. Finally, a good budget includes 10 to 20 per cent contingency in addition to all anticipated expenses to allow for inflation and the unexpected (we're all human).

Each of the four major categories is subdivided into smaller logical categories. The production category might be broken down into publications, audio-visual and special events, for example. Each of these, in turn, might be broken down. Under publications might be listed newsletter, brochures, direct mail, and press releases. Each of these categories might be broken down further into writing, photography, artwork, typesetting and printing. And, finally, within each of these categories individual items might be listed as follows:

number of items	item	cost per unit	total cost
10 hours	freelance writer for brochure	$10.//hr.	$100.00
20	Recording tape, 5-in. reels Scotch 111	$1.84/ea.	36.80

How you organize your budget depends on the specifics of your campaign. In the production category, for example, the specific expense categories you list depend upon the technical requirements of the media you are using. As long as the budget is logical, clear, and comprehensive you can't go too far wrong.

Perhaps the most difficult problem you'll encounter in developing a budget is knowing whether or not you've covered all of the possible expense areas. This is where your flowchart pays off in spades. Assemble the flowcharts you've developed for each program in your campaign. Fill out a work planning sheet for each task indicated on each flowchart. The work planning sheet helps you determine how much time is re-

quired by whom to carry out each task, as well as special facilities, equipment and materials. Each of these items can then be costed out and put into the proper category in the budget. (See example next page)

The work planning sheets will also help you administer the work schedules for people in your campaign organization.

Another difficult problem you'll come up with in laying out your budget is finding out how much things cost. The best you can do if you lack experience is to use the yellow pages and make a lot of phone calls to vendors. Keep in mind, however, that most items you'll use in your campaign are subject to considerable price negotiation. This is particularly true of salaries and creative fees, printing, broadcast time, and advertising space in publications. But even the price of such items as film, audio tape, paper, and computer time can be negotiated if you're going to be using reasonably large quantities. With this in mind you'll

PHOTO CAPTIONS

If photographs accompany a press release or a news story being sent to an editor, they require a caption. Most print media require 8-inch by 10-inch glossy photos. Check with the editor for exact dimensions.

Type a caption telling who, what, where, why, when on white paper. The caption should expand on and clarify the visual information in the photo, and not just duplicate it. Use rubber cement to attach the caption to the back of the photographic print. Don't use paper clips and don't write with ballpoint on the back of the print--you might damage the image.

Caroline Soule

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find that it pays to shop around, to get several quotes or bids for each major area of expense in your campaign. The money you'll save will buy you that much more coverage.

If your cause is popular and just, you'll find that many of the items that you'd normally pay for will be donated to you free of charge. It's a splendid idea to budget and account for each of these items just as though you were paying full market value. This helps you keep track of your real costs and prevents people in your organization from taking for granted the beneficence of your patrons.

Your first budget may be somewhat difficult to put together, but once you've collected a bit of experience and a file drawer filled with price sheets and catalogs, you'll bang out a budget faster than Bufferin whips headaches. Then your only problem is to stick to it.

TASK DESCRIPTION

TASK_____START TIME_____

END TIME_____JOB TIME_____

FREE FLOAT_____TOTAL FLOAT_____

TASK DESCRIPTION:

STARTING REQUIREMENTS:

CRITERIA FOR COMPLETION:

ESTIMATED MANHOURS:

SPACE REQUIREMENTS:

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT NEEDS:

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

Chapter 9

The map is not the territory --
Evaluate! Evaluate!

Although we've talked about the importance of two-way communication several times in this book, you'll find that it's difficult to hold a sprightly two-way conversation when mass media such as radio, television, newspapers, and magazines get into the act. Without mass media, however, it's difficult to talk with all the people you might want to when you're trying to change the schools. If you're going to use mass media, you have to find ingenious ways to let your audience talk back. The only way to do this is by designing feedback channels into your campaign right from the very beginning and by doing continuous audience research. The importance of this can be illustrated with an apocryphal tale:

Citizens to Return Morris Dancing to the Schools, a small but vigorous grass-roots organization, decides to launch a massive public communication campaign to help its cause. The director writes long tracts on the conspiracy against Morris Dancing in the educational bureaucracy, passes them out in subways during rush hour, and takes to calling the editors of the local newspapers at all hours of the day and night. After a month or so the director notices that the explosive mass movement that he'd expected to touch off amounts to little more than a complaint from his wife about the telephone bill. So he decides to step up his efforts. He pastes bumper stickers on all the cars in the downtown parking lots and nails up posters on telephone poles all over town. This brings him a call from the Chief of Police which he takes as further evidence of the insidious conspiracy he's been fighting all along.

His efforts are now charged with renewed zeal. He mortgages his house to buy television time to carry

his message to all the people, but before he can carry out his televised tour de force his wife and family psychiatrist whisk him off for a quiet rest at an expensive resort beside the sea.

Now if the director had been listening to the people he wanted to talk with, he would have realized that the last thing he needed was more communication. Indeed, the more he communicated, the worse his problems became. Often when people don't listen or respond to your messiage it's because they don't want to listen or respond. When this happens there's invariably a reason. If you raise the pitch of your communication efforts you may merely make them mad, rather than break through. If you can find out why they don't want to listen, on the other hand, you can change your tack and sometimes strike up a pretty rewarding conversation. But to find out why, you have to listen. Just as a map is not the same as the territory, your expectations of results in your campaign are not the same as the real thing. If you want to know where you

PLAN A PRESS CONFERENCE

What is a press conference?

When you have important news to share you can ask representatives of all the news media to meet with you to receive the story. If your story is worthwhile, you are providing an important service to working reporters by giving them an opportunity to get the facts, ask questions, and become familiar with your organization.

When should you hold a press conference?

You should only hold a press conference when you have important news. This requires second-guessing the assignment editors and working reporters. If the editors or reporters don't think your story is important, they will resent the fact that you called a press conference and will ignore you in the future.

A press conference might be called when you are introducing a controversial individual or idea, initiating a long series of events or a project that will effect a large number of people in your community. Rule of thumb: If your news can be adequately handled in a press release, use a release rather than a press conference.

Where should it be held?

If you are opening a gallery for student paintings, hold your conference among the paintings. If your speaker is protesting the building of a new housing complex, stage your conference amidst the construction. Where is the hub of activity? That's where your press conference should be. On the other hand, don't hold your conference in Timbuctu. Reporters won't go too far out of their way to get a story unless it's truly earth-shattering.

are at any phase of your campaign, evaluate and continue to evaluate from beginning to end.

Evaluation of your campaign is based on your objectives. If your objectives are well considered, they will tell you what to evaluate and when. As you'll recall, an objective is a measurable or observable point of progress that you must reach by a specific deadline. Evaluation, then, means measuring what you've actually achieved against what you'd hope to achieve. And, further, if you find some discrepancy, you must do the necessary troubleshooting to bring your campaign back on the track.

Actually, you should not take anything for granted in your campaign. If possible, measure whether or not your theme stimulates the associations in the audience that you want. How well does it catch their attention? How memorable do they find it? You should measure the attention-winning value, the comprehension value, the influence and the memorability of every message you put out with respect to your audience. You should further measure the reach and effectiveness of every communication channel you might want to use.

Unfortunately all this measurement is not as easy as one would like. For one thing the available tools are relatively crude. Themes and messages are often evaluated by bringing together a representative sample of the final audience and exposing them to the theme or message. Then they are interviewed in depth about the associations and meanings they've drawn.

The effectiveness of communication channels is often measured by scientific surveys to determine who uses them when. Again, careful surveys require you to identify a small representative sample of the final audience you want to reach.

Sometimes communicators want to know about the content of various media channels. You might want to know how the newspapers cover the schools in your area, for example, or what kinds of commercials are being televised for children. One would use content analysis for this kind of problem, which requires that you draw a statistically representative sample of the larger body of material and systematiclaly count or measure the various features of content that you are interested in.

Careful, controlled scientific measurement is time-consuming, expensive, and technically demanding. Many good books are available to help you design objective interviews, experiments, surveys or content analysis studies. You might start with Facts For A Change and Facts and Figures.

In addition to formal measurement, there are many ways you can measure results informally. You have to be careful when you do this, of course, because it's easy to see what you want to see rather than what's really there, but if your powers of observation and intuition are keen you can often get a good sense of the effectiveness of your campaign from bits and scraps of information that come your way informally.

One course of information is to listen to what friends and acquaintances have to say. If you let your friends know that you're after honest evaluations rather than flattery you're more than likely to get the kind of constructive criticism you need of things you write, say or do.

When you talk with people in the community, ask them about their views about education, the media, your organization and other organizations. Bring these questions up casually in conversation and you'll often

PLAN A PRESS CONFERENCE (continued)

How about scheduling?

Keep media deadlines in mind when scheduling your press conference. If you want to make the six o'clock news, hold your press conference at one o'clock or even earlier to give TV reporters time to process and edit the film and write the story. If you want to make your town's weekly paper, keep in mind its Monday or Tuesday deadline. Also, check with a few editors to see what other news you might be up against. If the President or Secretary of State is in town, your story is likely to get swamped out.

On inviting the press . . .

First a word of advice: Don't limit yourself by inviting only the most obvious members of the press. Could your event interest a financial reporter? How about consumer interest? Consider all angles. By inviting a variety of reporters you increase your chances of coverage.

Invitations should be sent 10 days to two weeks in advance. They should be accompanies by a fact sheet or release describing the event. Follow up with a phone call to the editors two or three days prior to the conference; call TV stations a day in advance.

Laurie Beckelman

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tap rich wells of perception, ideas and feelings. While you shouldn't regard these contacts as representative of the entire community, you should allow their perceptions to expand your notions about how people in the community feel. It's especially important to listen to what they have to say rather than put answers in their mouths.

In every message you send out, try to build in opportunities for people to respond. Give people a name and number they can call. When they call, ask how they heard about your organization. Keep records of who hears about your organization how.

Monitor the media systematically. Get different people in your community to monitor different newspapers, magazines, and broadcast stations. Keep records of who covers what and how.

Organizing fact-finding and discussion meetings in your community to provide an opportunity for outsiders to express their own opinions and ideas. Respect these opinions and follow up whenever possible.

For every word you say, listen to two from someone else. Listen in every quarter of your community every chance you get. Stop the mouth motor for a while and start the ear motor. Now you're really communicating.

So long. Been nice talking with you. Now I've got some listening to do.

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Articles on issues, research, law, education, and literature in broadcasting, including "Books in Review."

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Weekly, semiweekly, and triweekly newspapers in U.S. listed alphabetically by state and city. Gives circulation, ad rates, industrial characteristics of area.

Network Rates and Data. Skokie, Ill. Standard Rate & Data Service, Inc., 5201 Old Orchard Road, 60076. Annual.

Lists national and regional radio and TV networks with stations served, ad rates, and technical information.

Newspaper Circulation Analysis. Skokie, Ill: Standard Rate and Data Service, Inc., 5201 Old Orchard Road, 60076. Annual

Newspaper circulation data by geographic, county-by-county metro area analysis and by city zone, county, and metro areas.

Newspaper Circulation & Rate Trends (1946-1968). New York Association of National Advertisers, Inc., 155 East 44th St., 10017. 1969.

Aggregate circulation and rate trend of all U.S. English-language daily and Sunday newspapers and individual papers with over 50,000 readers.

The New York Times Index: The Master Key to the News. New York: New York Times Co., semimonthly with annual cumulation.

Since 1913 this index has summarized and classified the contents of the NEW YORK TIMES alphabetically by subjects, people, and organizations. Recently the TIMES has produced the index file back to 1851. Valuable source of information about mass media and advertising.

Ogilvy & Mather Pocket Guide to Media. 4th ed. New York. Ogilvy & Mather Inc., 2 East 48th St., New York 10017. 1971.

Dimensions, audience, and costs of major media. Gives TV ownership, audience, top 100 markets, NAB Codes; Radio ownership, audience, cost; consumer magazine circulation and cost; newspaper supplements, comics, readership. Information on outdoor, transit, and direct mail media. Glossary and list of syndicates.

Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature: An Author and Subject Index. New York: Wilson, cumulative.

An index to articles contained in general consumer magazines and some scholarly and trade ones. Articles on mass media from major political interest and news magazines.

Standard Periodical Directory. ed. Leon Garry. 3d ed. New York: Oxbridge, 1969.

Subtitled, "The Most Complete Guide to United States and Canadian Periodicals...Information on more than 50,000 publications." Alphatical index to titles.

Variety

Among trade journals, VARIETY offers picturesque language and comprehensive coverage of motion pictures, the recording industry, broadcasting, and "show biz" in general. Reports news, interprets trends and government action in entertainment industry. Reviews films including foreign, underground, domestic, and commercial.

The Wall Street Journal Index. New York: Dow-Jones, monthly.

Index to New York edition of the WALL STREET JOURNAL. Reports trends in mass media and provides business information.

The Working Press of the Nation. Magazine and Editorial Directory. Vol. 2. Chicago: National Research Bureau, annual.

Lists magazines for public relations people by interest and alphabetically, with name, address, phone, deadlines, circulation, subscription rates, and editorial and circulation analysis.

The Working Press of the Nation. Radio and TV Directory. Vol. 3. Chicago: National Research Bureau, annual.

Detailed information on radio and TV stations, networks, radio and television programs, sports directors, film buyers, newscasters, and program personnel.

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